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ΜΝΗΣΤΗΡΟΦΟΝΙΑ

P. Pourdrimer. sculp.

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THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Tranſlated from the *GREEK*.

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A GENERAL VIEW OF THE EPIC POEM, AND OF THE *ILIAD* and *ODYSSEY*.

Extracted from *BOSSU*.

SECT. I.

THE Fables of Poets were originally employ'd in repreſenting the *Divine Nature* *, according to the notion then conceived of it. This ſublime Subject occaſioned the firſt Poets to be called Divines, and Poetry the *Language of the Gods*. They divided the divine Attributes into ſo many Perſons; becauſe the infirmity of a human Mind cannot ſufficiently conceive, or explain, ſo much Power and Action in a Simplicity ſo great and indiviſible as that of God. And perhaps they were alſo jealous of the advantages they reap'd from ſuch excellent and exalted learning, and of which they thought the vulgar part of mankind was not worthy.

* *Of the Nature of Epic Poetry.*

They could not deſcribe the Operations of this Almighty Cauſe, without ſpeaking at the ſame time of its Effects: ſo that to Divinity they added *Phyſiology*, and treated of both, without quitting the umbrages of their Allegorical Expreſſions.

But *Man* being the chief and the moſt noble of all that God produced, and nothing being ſo proper, or more uſeful to Poets than this Subject; they added it to the former, and treated of the doctrine of *Morality* after the ſame manner as they did that of Divinity and Philoſophy: And from Morality thus treated, is formed that kind of Poem and Fable which we call *Epic*.

The Poets did the ſame in Morality, that the Divines had done in Divinity. But that infinite variety of the actions and operations of the Divine Nature, (to which our underſtanding bears ſo ſmall a proportion) did as it were force them upon dividing the ſingle Idea of the Only One God into ſeveral Perſons, under the different names of *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Neptune* and the reſt.

And on the other hand, the nature of Moral Philoſophy being ſuch, as never to treat of things in particular, but in general; the Epic Poets were obliged to unite in one ſingle Idea, in one and the ſame Perſon, and in an Action which appeared ſingular, all that looked like it in different perſons, and in various actions; which might be thus contained as ſo many *Species* under their *Genus*.

The Preſence of the Deity, and the Care ſuch an auguſt Cauſe is to be ſuppoſed to take about any action, obliges the Poet to repreſent this action as great, important, and managed by * Kings and Princes.

* *Res geſtæ regumque ducumque.* Hor. Art. Poet.

Princes. It obliges him likewiſe to think and ſpeak in an elevated way above the vulgar, and in a ſtyle that may in ſome ſort keep up the character of the Divine Perſons he introduces. † To this end ſerve the poetical and figurative Expreſſion, and the Majeſty of the Heroic Verſe.

But all this, being divine and ſurpriſing, may quite ruin all Probability: Therefore the Poet ſhould take a peculiar care as to that point, ſince his chief aim is to inſtruct, and without Probability any action is leſs likely to perſuade.

Laſtly, ſince Precepts ought to be ‡ conciſe, to be the more eaſily conceived, and leſs oppreſs the memory; and ſince nothing can be more effectual to this end than propoſing one ſingle Idea, and collecting all things ſo well together, as to be preſent to our minds all at once; therefore the Poets have reduced all to one § ſingle action, under one and the ſame deſign, and in a body whoſe members and parts ſhould be homogenous.

What we have obſerved of the nature of the Epic Poem, gives us a juſt Idea of it, and we may define it thus:

" The Epic Poem is a diſcourſe invented by art, " to form the Manners, by ſuch inſtructions as are " diſguiſed under the allegories of ſome one import- " ant Action, which is related in verſe, after a " probable, diverting, and ſurprizing manner.

† ——— *Cui mens divinior atque os*
Magna ſonaturum, des Nominis hujus honorem. Horat.
‡ *Quicquid præcipies eſto brevis, ut citò dicta*
Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles. Hor. Poet.
§ *Denique ſit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat, & unum.* Ibid.

SECT. II.

* In every deſign which a man deliberately undertakes, the end he propoſes is the firſt thing in his mind, and that by which he governs the whole work, and all its parts: Thus ſince the End of the Epic Poem is to regulate the Manners, 'tis with this firſt view the Poet ought to begin.

But there is a great difference between the Philoſophical and the Poetical doctrine of Manners. The Schoolmen content themſelves with treating of Virtues and Vices in general: the inſtructions they give are proper for all States, People, and for all Ages. But the Poet has a nearer regard to his own Country, and the neceſſities of his own nation. With this deſign he makes choice of ſome piece of morality, the moſt proper and juſt he can imagine: And in order to preſs this home, he makes leſs uſe of the force of Reaſoning, than of the power of Inſinuation; accommodating himſelf to the particular cuſtoms and inclinations of thoſe, who are to be the ſubject, or the readers, of his work.

Let us now ſee how *Homer* has acquitted himſelf in theſe reſpects.

He ſaw the *Grecians*, for whom he deſigned his Poem, were divided into as many States as they had capital Cities. Each was a Body Politick apart, and had its form of government independent from all the reſt. And yet theſe diſtinct States were very often obliged to unite together in one body againſt their common Enemies. Theſe were two very different ſorts of Government, ſuch as could not be comprehended in one maxim of morality, and in one ſingle Poem.

* *The Fable of the* Iliad.

The

The Poet therefore has made two diſtinct Fables of them. The one is for *Greece* in general, united into one body, but compoſed of parts independent on each other; and the other for each particular ſtate, conſidered as they were in time of peace, without the former circumſtances and the neceſſity of being united.

As for the firſt ſort of government, in the Union or rather in the Confederacy of many independent States; experience has always made it appear, "That nothing ſo much cauſes ſucceſs as a due "ſubordination, and a right underſtanding among "the chief commanders. And on the other hand, "the inevitable ruin of ſuch confederacies proceeds "from the heats, jealouſies and ambition of the "different leaders, and the diſcontents of ſubmit-"ting to a ſingle General." All ſorts of States, and in particular the *Grecians*, had dearly experienc'd this truth. So that the moſt uſeful and neceſſary inſtruction that could be given them, was, to lay before their eyes the loſs which both the People and the Princes muſt of neceſſity ſuffer, by the ambition, diſcord, and obſtinacy of the latter.

Homer then has taken for the foundation of his Fable this great Truth; That a Miſunderſtanding between Princes is the Ruin of their own States. "I ſing (ſays he) the Anger of *Achilles*, ſo perni-"cious to the *Grecians*, and the cauſe of ſo many "Heroes deaths, occaſioned by the Diſcord and "Separation of *Agamemnon* and that Prince.

But that this truth may be compleatly and fully known, there is need of a ſecond to ſupport it. 'Tis neceſſary in ſuch a deſign, not only to repreſent the Confederate States at firſt diſagreeing among

themſelves, and from thence unfortunate; but to ſhow the ſame States afterwards reconciled and united, and of conſequence victorious.

Let us now ſee how he has join'd all theſe in one general action.

" Several Princes independent on one another " were united againſt a common enemy. The " perſon whom they had elected their General, " offers an affront to the moſt valiant of all the " Confederates. This offended Prince is ſo far pro- " voked, as to relinquiſh the Union, and obſtinately " refuſe to fight for the common cauſe. This Miſ- " underſtanding gives the enemy ſuch an advantage, " that the Allies are very near quitting their deſign " with diſhonour. He himſelf who made the ſepa- " ration, is not exempt from ſharing the misfor- " tune which he brought upon his party. For " having permitted his intimate friend to ſuccour " them in a great neceſſity, this friend is killed by " the enemy's General. Thus the contending " Princes being both made wiſer at their own coſt, " are reconciled, and unite again; Then this valiant " Prince not only obtains the victory in the publick " cauſe, but revenges his private wrongs by killing " with his own hands the author of the death of " his friend.

This is the firſt Platform of the Poem, and the Fiction which reduces into one important and univerſal Action all the particulars upon which it turns.

In the next place it muſt be rendered Probable by the circumſtances of times, places and perſons: Some perſons muſt be found out, already known by Hiſtory or otherwiſe, whom we may with Probability make the actors and perſonages of this Fable. *Homer* has

has made choice of the ſiege of *Troy*, and feign'd that this action happened there. To a Phantom of his brain, whom he would paint valiant and cholerick, he has given the name of *Achilles*; that of *Agamemnon* to his General; that of *Hector* to the Enemy's Commander, and ſo to the reſt.

Beſides, he was obliged to accommodate himſelf to the manners, cuſtoms, and genius of the *Greeks* his Auditors, the better to make them attend to the inſtruction of his Poem; and to gain their approbation by praiſing them: So that they might the better forgive him the repreſentation of their own faults in ſome of his chief Perſonages. He admirably diſcharges all theſe duties, by making theſe brave Princes and thoſe victorious people all *Grecians*, and the fathers of thoſe he had a mind to commend.

But not being content, in a work of ſuch a length, to propoſe only the principal point of the Moral, and to fill up the reſt with uſeleſs ornaments and foreign incidents, he extends this Moral by all its neceſſary conſequences. As for inſtance in the ſubject before us, 'tis not enough to know, that a good underſtanding ought always to be maintained among Confederates: 'Tis likewiſe of equal importance, that if there happens any diviſion, care muſt be taken to keep it ſecret from the enemy, that their ignorance of this advantage may prevent their making uſe of it. And in the ſecond place, when their concord is but counterfeit and only in appearance, one ſhould never preſs the enemy too cloſely; for this would diſcover the weakneſs which we ought to conceal from them.

The Epiſode of *Patroclus* moſt admirably furniſhes us with theſe two inſtructions. For when he appeared in the arms of *Achilles*, the *Trojans*, who took

him for that Prince now reconciled and united to the Confederates, immediately gave ground, and quitted the advantages they had before over the *Greeks*. But *Patroclus*, who ſhould have been contented with this ſucceſs, preſſes upon *Hector* too boldly, and by obliging him to fight, ſoon diſcovers that it was not the true *Achilles* who was clad in his armour, but a Hero of much inferior proweſs. So that *Hector* kills him, and regains thoſe advantages which the *Trojans* had loſt, on the opinion that *Achilles* was reconcil'd.

SECT. III.

* THE *Odyſſey* was not deſign'd, like the *Iliad*, for the inſtruction of all the States of *Greece* join'd in one body, but for each State in particular. As a State is compoſed of two parts; the Head which commands, and the Members which obey; there are inſtructions requiſite to both, to teach the one to govern, and the others to ſubmit to Government.

There are two Virtues neceſſary to one in authority, Prudence to order, and Care to ſee his orders put in execution. The Prudence of a Politician is not acquired but by a long experience in all ſorts of buſineſs, and by an acquaintance with all the different forms of Governments and States. The Care of the Adminiſtration ſuffers not him that has the Government to rely upon others, but requires his own preſence: And Kings who are abſent from their States, are in danger of loſing them, and give occaſion to great diſorders and confuſion.

Theſe two points may be eaſily united in one and the ſame man. " A King forſakes his Kingdom

" to

* *The Fable of the* Odyſſey.

" to viſit the courts of ſeveral Princes, where he " learns the manners and cuſtoms of different na- " tions. From hence there naturally ariſes a vaſt " number of incidents, of dangers, and of adven- " tures, very uſeful for a Political inſtitution. On " the other ſide, this Abſence gives way to the diſ- " orders which happen in his own kingdom, and " which end not till his return, whoſe preſence " only can re-eſtabliſh all things." Thus the Abſence of a King has the ſame effects in this Fable, as the Diviſion of the Princes had in the former.

The Subjects have ſcarce any need but of one general maxim, which is, To ſuffer themſelves to be governed, and to obey faithfully; whatever reaſon they may imagine againſt the orders they receiv'd. It is eaſy to join this inſtruction with the other, by beſtowing on this wiſe and induſtrious Prince ſuch Subjects, as in his abſence would rather follow their own judgment than his commands; and by demonſtrating the misfortunes which this diſobedience draws upon them, the evil conſequences which almoſt infallibly attend theſe particular notions, which are intirely different from the general Idea of him who ought to govern.

But as it was neceſſary that the Princes in the *Iliad* ſhould be cholerick and quarrelſome, ſo it is neceſſary in the Fable of the *Odyſſey* that the chief perſon ſhould be ſage and prudent. This raiſes a difficulty in the Fiction; becauſe this perſon ought to be abſent for the two reaſons aforementioned, which are eſſential to the Fable, and which conſtitute the principal aim of it: But he cannot abſent himſelf, without offending againſt another maxim of

equal

equal importance; *viz.* That a King ſhould upon no account leave his Country.

It is true, there are ſometimes ſuch neceſſities as ſufficiently excuſe the Prudence of a Politician in this point. But ſuch a neceſſity is a thing important enough of itſelf to ſupply matter for another Poem, and this multiplication of the action would be vicious. To prevent which, in the firſt place, this Neceſſity and the departure of the Hero muſt be diſjoined from the Poem; and in the ſecond place, the Hero having been obliged to abſent himſelf, for a reaſon antecedent to the action and plac'd diſtinct from the Fable, he ought not ſo far to embrace this opportunity of inſtructing himſelf, as to abſent himſelf voluntarily from his own Government. For at this rate, his Abſence would be merely voluntary, and one might with reaſon lay to his charge all the diſorders which might ariſe.

Thus in the conſtitution of the Fable he ought not to take for his action, and for the foundation of his Poem, the Departure of a Prince from his own country, nor his voluntary ſtay in any other place; but his Return, and this return retarded againſt his will. This is the firſt Idea *Homer* gives us of it. * His Hero appears at firſt in a deſolate Iſland, ſitting upon the ſide of the Sea, which with tears in his eyes he looks upon as the obſtacle that had ſo long oppos'd his Return, and detained him from reviſiting his own dear Country.

And laſtly, ſince this forced delay might more naturally and uſually happen to ſuch as make voyages by ſea; *Homer* has judiciouſly made choice of a Prince whoſe Kingdom was in an Iſland.

Let

* *Odyſſey* 5.

Let us ſee then how he has feigned all this Action, making his Hero a perſon in years, becauſe Years are requiſite to inſtruct a man in Prudence and Policy.

" A Prince had been obliged to forſake his native " Country, and to head an Army of his Subjects in " a foreign expedition. Having glorioufly perform'd " this enterpriſe, he was marching home again, and " conducting his Subjects to his own State. But " ſpite of all the attempts, with which the eager- " neſs to return had inſpir'd him, he was ſtopt by " the way by tempeſts for ſeveral years, and caſt " upon ſeveral countries differing from each other " in Manners and Government. In theſe dangers " his Companions not always following his orders, " periſhed through their own fault. The Grandees " of his country ſtrangely abuſe his abſence, and " raiſe no ſmall diſorders at home. They conſume " his eſtate, conſpire to deſtroy his ſon, would " conſtrain his Queen to accept of one of them for " her Huſband; and indulge themſelves in all vio- " lence, ſo much the more, becauſe they were per- " ſuaded he would never return. But at laſt he " returns, and diſcovering himſelf only to his ſon " and ſome others, who had continued firm to " him, he is an eye-witneſs of the inſolence of his " enemies, puniſhes them according to their deſerts, " and reſtores to his Iſland that tranquillity and " repoſe to which they had been ſtrangers during " his abſence.

As the Truth, which ſerves for foundation to this fiction is, that the Abſence of a perſon from his own home, or his neglect of his own affairs, is the cauſe of great diſorders: So the principal point of the Action, and the moſt Eſſential one, is the Abſence

ſence of the Hero. This fills almoſt all the Poem: For not only this real abſence laſted ſeveral years, but even when the Hero returned, he does not diſcover himſelf; and this prudent diſguiſe, from whence he reaped ſo much advantage, has the ſame effect upon the Authors of the diſorders, and all others who knew him not, as his real abſence had before, ſo that he is abſent as to them, 'till the very moment of their puniſhment.

After the Poet had thus compoſed his Fable, and join'd the Fiction to the Truth, he then makes choice of *Ulyſſes* the King of the Iſle of *Ithaca*, to maintain the character of his chief Perſonage, and beſtowed the reſt upon *Telemachus*, *Penelope*, *Antinous*, and others, whom he calls by what names he pleaſes.

I ſhall not here inſiſt upon the many excellent advices, which are ſo many parts and natural conſequences of the fundamental Truth; and which the Poet very dextrouſly lays down in thoſe fictions which are the Epiſodes and Members of the entire Action. Such for inſtance are theſe advices: Not to intrude one's ſelf into the Myſteries of Government, which the Prince keeps ſecret: This is repreſented to us by the winds ſhut up in a bull-hide, which the miſerable Companions of *Ulyſſes* would needs be ſo fooliſh as to pry into. Not to ſuffer one's ſelf to be led away by the ſeeming Charms of an idle and inactive life, to which the *Sirens Song* invited *. Not to ſuffer one's ſelf to be ſenſualized by pleaſures, like thoſe who were changed into brutes by *Circe:* And a great many other points of Morality neceſſary for all ſorts of people.

* *Improba Siren deſidia.* Horat.

This

This Poem is more uſeful to the People than the *Iliad*, where the ſubjects ſuffer rather by the ill conduct of their Princes, than thro' their own miſcarriages. But in the *Odyſſey*, 'tis not the fault of *Ulyſſes* that is the ruin of his Subjects. This wiſe Prince leaves untry'd no method to make them partakers of the benefit of his return. Thus the Poet in the *Iliad* ſays, "He ſings the anger of *Achilles*, which had "cauſed the death of ſo many *Grecians*;" and on the contrary, in the † *Odyſſey* he tells his Readers, "That the Subjects periſhed through their own "fault."

SECT. IV.

‡ *ARISTOTLE* beſtows great Encomiums upon *Homer* for the Simplicity of his deſign, becauſe he has included in one ſingle part all that happened at the ſiege of *Troy*. And to this he oppoſes the ignorance of ſome Poets who imagined that the Unity of the Fable or Action was ſufficiently preſerved by the Unity of the Hero; and who compoſed their *Theſeids*, *Heracleids*, and the like, wherein they only heap'd up in one Poem every thing that happened to one Perſonage.

He finds fault with thoſe Poets who were for reducing the Unity of the *Fable* into the Unity of the *Hero*, becauſe one Man may have performed ſeveral adventures, which 'tis impoſſible to reduce under any one and ſimple head. This reducing of all things

† Αυτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο. Odyſſ. 1.

‡ *Of the Unity of the Fable.*

things to Unity and Simplicity is what *Horace* likewiſe makes his firſt Rule.

Denique ſit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat, & unum.

According to theſe Rules, it will be allowable to make uſe of ſeveral Fables; (or to ſpeak more correctly) of ſeveral Incidents which may be divided into ſeveral Fables; provided they are ſo ordered, that the Unity of the Fable be not ſpoiled. This liberty is ſtill greater in the Epic Poem, becauſe 'tis of a larger extent, and ought to be entire and compleat.

I will explain myſelf more diſtinctly by the Practice of *Homer*.

No doubt but one might make four diſtinct Fables out of theſe four following inſtructions.

1. *Diviſion between thoſe of the ſame Party expoſes them entirely to their enemies.*

2. *Conceal your Weakneſs, and you will be dreaded as much, as if you had none of thoſe imperfections, of which they are ignorant.*

3. *When your ſtrength is only feign'd, and founded only in the Opinion of others; never venture ſo far as if your ſtrength was real.*

4. *The more you agree together, the leſs hurt can your Enemies do you.*

'Tis plain, I ſay, that each of theſe particular Maxims might ſerve for the Ground-work of a Fiction, and one might make four diſtinct Fables out of them. May one not then put all theſe into one ſingle *Epopea?* Not unleſs one ſingle Fable can be made out of all. The Poet indeed may have ſo much ſkill as to unite all into one Body, as Members and Parts, each of which taken aſunder would be imperfect; and

and if he joins them ſo, as that his Conjunction ſhall be no hindrance at all to the Unity and the regular Simplicity of the Fable. This is what *Homer* has done with ſuch ſucceſs in the compoſition of the *Iliad*.

1. *The Diviſion between* Achilles *and his Allies tended to the ruin of their Deſigns.* 2. Patroclus *comes to their relief in the Armour of this Hero, and* Hector *retreats.* 3. *But this young Man puſhing the Advantage which his diſguiſe gave him, too far, ventures to engage with* Hector *himſelf; but not being maſter of* Achilles's *ſtrength (whom he only repreſented in outward appearance) he is killed, and by this means leaves the* Grecian *Affairs in the ſame diſorder, from which in that diſguiſe he came to free them.* 4. Achilles *provoked at the Death of his Friend, is reconciled, and revenges his loſs by the death of* Hector. Theſe various incidents being thus united, do not make different Actions and Fables, but are only the uncompleat and unfiniſhed parts of one and the ſame Action and Fable, which alone can be ſaid to be compleat and entire: And all theſe Maxims of the Moral, are eaſily reduced into theſe two parts, which in my opinion cannot be ſeparated without enervating the force of both. The two parts are theſe, * That a right underſtanding is the preſervation, and Diſcord the deſtruction of States.

Tho' then the Poet has made uſe of two parts in his Poems, each of which might have ſerved for a Fable, as we have obſerved: Yet this Multiplication cannot be called a vicious and irregular *Polymythia*, contrary to the neceſſary Unity and Simplicity of the Fable; but it gives the Fable another qualification, altogether neceſſary and regular, namely its Perfection and finiſhing ſtroke.

* *Concordiâ res parvæ creſcunt: diſcordiâ magnæ dilabuntur.* Saluſt. de bello Jug.

SECT.

SECT. V.

† THE Action of a Poem is the Subject which the Poet undertakes, propoſes, and builds upon. So that the Moral and the Inſtructions which are the end of the Epic Poem are not the Matter of it. Thoſe the Poets leave in their Allegorical and figurative obſcurity. They only give notice at the *Exordium*, that they ſing ſome *Action*. *The Revenge of* Achilles, *the Return of* Ulyſſes, *&c.*

Since then the Action is the Matter of a Fable, it is evident that whatever incidents are eſſential to the Fable, or conſtitute a part of it, are neceſſary alſo to the Action, and are parts of the Epic Matter, none of which ought to be omitted. Such, for Inſtance, are the contention of *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*, the ſlaughter *Hector* makes in the *Grecian* Army, the Re-union of the *Greek* Princes; and laſtly, the Reſettlement and Victory which was the conſequence of that Re-union.

There are four qualifications in the Epic Action: the firſt is its *Unity*, the ſecond its *Integrity*, the third its *Importance*, the fourth its *Duration*.

The Unity of the Epic Action, as well as the Unity of the Fable, does not conſiſt either in the Unity of the Hero, or in the Unity of Time: Three things I ſuppoſe are neceſſary to it. The firſt is, to make uſe of no Epiſode but what ariſes from the very platform and foundation of the Action, and is as it were a natural member of the body. The ſecond is, exactly to unite theſe Epiſodes and theſe Members with one another. And the third is, never to finiſh any Epiſode ſo as it may ſeem to be an

an entire Action; but to let each Epiſode ſtill appear in its own particular nature, as the member of a body, and as a part of itſelf not compleat.

* *Ariſtotle* not only ſays that the Epic Action ſhould be One, but adds, that it ſhould be entire, perfect and compleat, and for this purpoſe ought to have a *Beginning*, a *Middle*, and an *End*. Theſe three parts of a whole are too generally and univerſally denoted by the words, Beginning, Middle, and End; we may interpret them more preciſely, and ſay, That the Cauſes and Deſigns of an Action are the Beginning: That the Effects of theſe Cauſes, and the Difficulties that are met with in the execution of theſe deſigns, are the Middle; and that the Unravelling and Reſolution of theſe difficulties are the End.

† *Homer*'s deſign in the *Iliad* is to relate the Anger and Revenge of *Achilles*. The Beginning of this Action is the Change of *Achilles* from a calm to a paſſionate temper. The Middle is the Effects of his Paſſion, and all the illuſtrious Deaths it is the Cauſe of. The end of this ſame Action is the Return of *Achilles* to his calmneſs of temper again. All was quiet in the *Grecian* Camp, when *Agamemnon* their General provokes *Apollo* againſt them, whom he was willing to appeaſe afterwards at the coſt and prejudice of *Achilles*, who had no part in his fault. This then is an exact Beginning: It ſuppoſes nothing before and requires after it the Effects of this Anger. *Achilles* revenges himſelf, and that is an exact Middle; it ſuppoſes before it the Anger of *Achilles*, this Revenge is the Effect of it. Then this Middle requires after it

* *Of the Beginning, Middle, and End of the Action.*
† *The Action of the* Iliad.

it the Effects of this Revenge, which is the Satisfaction of *Achilles*: for the Revenge had not been compleat, unleſs *Achilles* had been ſatisfied. By this means the Poet makes his Hero, after he was glutted by the Miſchief he had done to *Agamemnon*, by the death of *Hector*, and the honour he did his friend, by inſulting o'er his Murderer; he makes him, I ſay, to be moved by the Tears and Misfortunes of King *Priam*. We ſee him as calm at the End of the Poem, during the funeral of *Hector*, as he was at the Beginning of the Poem, whilſt the Plague raged among the *Grecians*. This End is juſt, ſince the Calmneſs of temper *Achilles* re-enjoy'd, is only an Effect of the Revenge which ought to have preceded: And after this no Body expects any more of his Anger. Thus has *Homer* been very exact in the Beginning, Middle and End of the Action he made choice of for the ſubject of his *Iliad*.

* His Deſign in the *Odyſſey* was to deſcribe the Return of *Ulyſſes* from the Siege of *Troy*, and his Arrival at *Ithaca*. He opens this Poem with the complaints of *Minerva* againſt *Neptune*, who oppoſed the Return of this Hero, and againſt *Calypſo* who detained him in an Iſland from *Ithaca*. Is this a Beginning? No; doubtleſs, the Reader would know why *Neptune* is diſpleaſed with *Ulyſſes*, and how this Prince came to be with *Calypſo*? He would know how he came from *Troy* thither? The Poet anſwers his Demands out of the Mouth of *Ulyſſes* himſelf, who relates theſe things, and begins the Action, by the Recital of his Travels from the City of *Troy*. It ſignifies little whether the Beginning of the Action be the Beginning of the Poem. The Beginning of this

* *The Action of the Odyſſey.*

this Action is that which happens to *Ulyſſes*, when upon his leaving *Troy* he bends his Courſe for *Ithaca*. The Middle comprehends all the Misfortunes he endured, and all the Diſorders of his own Government. The End is the re-inſtating of the Hero in the peaceable poſſeſſion of his Kingdom, where he was acknowledged by his Son, his Wife, his Father, and ſeveral others. The Poet was ſenſible he ſhould have ended ill, had he gone no farther than the death of theſe Princes, who were the Rivals and enemies of *Ulyſſes*, becauſe the Reader might have looked for ſome Revenge which the Subjects of theſe Princes might have taken, on him who had killed their Sovereigns: But this Danger over, and the People vanquiſhed and quieted, there was nothing more to be expected. The Poem and the Action have all their Parts, and no more.

But the Order of the *Odyſſey* differs from that of the *Iliad*, in that the *Poem* does not begin with the Beginning of the *Action*.

* The *Cauſes of the Action* are alſo what the Poet is obliged to give an Account of. There are three ſorts of Cauſes, the Humours, the Intereſts, and the Deſigns of Men; and theſe different Cauſes of an Action are likewiſe often the Cauſes of one another, every Man taking up thoſe Intereſts in which his Humour ingages him, and forming thoſe Deſigns to which his Humour and Intereſt incline him. Of all theſe the Poet ought to inform his Readers, and render them conſpicuous in his principal Perſonages.

Homer has ingeniouſly begun his *Odyſſey* with the Tranſactions at *Ithaca*, during the abſence of *Ulyſſes*. If he had begun with the Travels of his Hero, he would

* *Of the Cauſes and Beginning of the Action.*

would ſcarce have ſpoken of any one elſe, and a man might have read a great deal of the Poem, without conceiving the leaſt Idea of *Telemachus*, *Penelope*, or her Suitors, who had ſo great a ſhare in the Action; but in the Beginning he has pitched upon, beſides theſe Perſonages whom he diſcovers, he repreſents *Ulyſſes* in his full Length, and from the very firſt opening one ſees the Intereſt which the Gods take in the Action.

The Skill and Care of the ſame Poet may be ſeen likewiſe in inducing his Perſonages in the firſt Book of his *Iliad*, where he diſcovers the Humours, the Intereſts, and the Deſigns of *Agamemnon*, *Achilles*, *Hector*, *Ulyſſes*, and ſeveral others, and even of the Deities. And in his Second he makes a Review of the *Grecian* and *Trojan* Armies, which is full Evidence, that all we have here ſaid is very neceſſary.

* As theſe *Cauſes* are the *Beginning* of the Action, the oppoſite Deſigns againſt that of the Hero are the *Middle* of it, and form that Difficulty or *Intrigue*, which makes up the greateſt part of the Poem; the Solution or *Unravelling* commences when the Reader begins to ſee that difficulty removed, and the doubts cleared up. *Homer* has divided each of his Poems into two Parts, and has put a particular Intrigue, and the Solution of it into each Part.

The firſt Part of the *Iliad* is the Anger of *Achilles*, who is for revenging himſelf upon *Agamemnon* by the means of *Hector* and the *Trojans*. The *Intrigue* comprehends the three days Fight which happened in the Abſence of *Achilles*: and it conſiſts on one ſide in the reſiſtance of *Agamemnon* and the *Grecians*: and on the other in the revengeful and inexorable Humour of *Achilles*,

* *Of the Middle or Intrigue of the Action.*

Achilles, which would not ſuffer him to be reconciled. The Loſs of the *Grecians*, and the Deſpair of *Agamemnon*, prepare for a Solution by the ſatisfaction which the incenſed Hero received from it. The death of *Patroclus* join'd to the Offers of *Agamemnon*, which of itſelf had proved ineffectual, remove this Difficulty, and make the Unravelling of the firſt part.

This death is likewiſe the Beginning of the ſecond Part; ſince it puts *Achilles* upon the deſign of revenging himſelf on *Hector*. But the deſign of *Hector* is oppoſite to that of *Achilles*: This *Trojan* is valiant and reſolved to ſtand on his own Defence. This Valour and Reſolution of *Hector*, are on his part the cauſe of the Intrigue. All the Endeavours *Achilles* uſed to meet with *Hector* and be the death of him; and the contrary Endeavours of the *Trojan* to keep out of his reach, and defend himſelf; are the intrigue; which comprehends the battle of the laſt day. The Unravelling begins at the death of *Hector*; and beſides that, it contains the inſulting of *Achilles* over his Body, the Honours he paid to *Patroclus*, and the Intreaties of King *Priam*. The regrets of this King and the other *Trojans*, in the ſorrowful Obſequies they paid to *Hector*'s body, end the Unravelling; they juſtify the ſatisfaction of *Achilles*, and demonſtrate his Tranquillity.

The firſt part of the *Odyſſey* is the Return of *Ulyſſes* into *Ithaca*. *Neptune* oppoſes it by raiſing tempeſts, and this makes the Intrigue. The Unravelling is the arrival of *Ulyſſes* upon his own Iſland, where *Neptune* could offer him no farther injury. The ſecond part is the re-inſtating this Hero in his own Government. The Princes that are his Rivals, oppoſe him, and this is a freſh Intrigue: The So-

lution of it begins at their deaths, and is compleated as ſoon as the *Ithacans* were appeaſed.

Theſe two parts in the *Odyſſey* have not one common Intrigue. The Anger of *Achilles* forms both the Intrigues in the *Iliad*; and it is ſo far the Matter of this *Epopéa*, that the very Beginning and End of this Poem depend on the Beginning and End of this Anger. But let the Deſire *Achilles* had to revenge himſelf, and the Deſire *Ulyſſes* had to return to his own Country be never ſo near ally'd, yet we cannot place them under one and the ſame Notion: For that Deſire of *Ulyſſes* is not a Paſſion that begins and ends in the Poem with the Action: 'tis a natural Habit: nor does the Poet propoſe it for his Subject as he does the Anger of *Achilles*.

We have already obſerved what is meant by the *Intrigue*, and the *Unravelling* thereof; let us now ſay ſomething of the Manner of forming both. Theſe two ſhould ariſe naturally out of the very Eſſence and Subject of the Poem, and are to be deduced from thence. Their Conduct is ſo exact and natural, that it ſeems as if their Action had preſented them with whatever they inſerted, without putting themſelves to the Trouble of a farther Inquiry.

What is more uſual and natural to Warriors, than Anger, Heat, Paſſion, and Impatience of bearing the leaſt Affront or Diſreſpect? This is what forms the Intrigue of the *Iliad*; and every thing we read there is nothing elſe but the Effect of this Humour and theſe Paſſions.

What more natural and uſual Obſtacle to thoſe who take Voyages, than the Sea, the Winds, and the Storms? *Homer* makes this the Intrigue of the firſt part of the *Odyſſey*: And for the ſecond, he makes

makes uſe of almoſt the infallible effect of the long Abſence of a Maſter, whoſe return is quite deſpaired of, *viz.* the Inſolence of his Servants and Neighbours, the Danger of his Son and Wife, and the Sequeſtration of his Eſtate. Beſides, an Abſence of almoſt twenty Years, and the inſupportable Fatigues joined to the Age of which *Ulyſſes* then was, might induce him to believe that he ſhould not be owned by thoſe who thought him dead, and whoſe Intereſt it was to have him really ſo. Therefore if he had preſently declared who he was, and had called himſelf *Ulyſſes*, they would eaſily have deſtroyed him as an Impoſtor, before he had an Opportunity to make himſelf known.

There could be nothing more natural nor more neceſſary than this ingenious Diſguiſe, to which the Advantages his Enemies had taken of his Abſence had reduced him, and to which his long Misfortunes had inured him. This allowed him an opportunity, without hazarding any thing, of taking the beſt Meaſures he could, againſt thoſe perſons who could not ſo much as miſtruſt any harm from him. This way was afforded him by the very Nature of his Action, to execute his Deſigns, and overcome the Obſtacles it caſt before him. And it is this conteſt between the Prudence and the Diſſimulation of a ſingle Man on one hand, and the ungovernable Inſolence of ſo many Rivals on the other, which conſtitutes the Intrigue of the ſecond Part of the *Odyſſey*.

* If the *Plot* or *Intrigue* muſt be natural, and ſuch as ſprings from the very Subject, as has been already urged; then the *Winding up* of the Plot, by

* *Of the End or Unravelling of the Action.*

a more ſure claim, muſt have this Qualification, and be a probable conſequence of all that went before. As this is what the Readers regard more than the reſt, ſo ſhould the Poet be more exact in it. This is the End of the Poem, and the laſt Impreſſion that is to be ſtamped upon them.

We ſhall find this in the *Odyſſey*. *Ulyſſes* by a Tempeſt is caſt upon the Iſland of the *Phæacians*, to whom he diſcovers himſelf, and deſires they would favour his Return to his own Country which was not very far diſtant. One cannot ſee any reaſon why the King of this Iſland ſhould refuſe ſuch a reaſonable Requeſt, to a Hero whom he ſeemed to have in great Eſteem. The *Phæacians* indeed had heard him tell the Story of his Adventures; and in this fabulous recital conſiſted all the advantage that could derive from his Preſence; for the Art of War which they admired in him, his Undauntedneſs under Dangers, his indefatigable Patience, and other Virtues, were ſuch as theſe Iſlanders were not uſed to. All their Talent lay in Singing and Dancing, and whatſoever was charming in a quiet Life. And here we ſee how dextrouſly *Homer* prepares the Incidents he makes uſe of. Theſe People could do no leſs, for the Account with which *Ulyſſes* had ſo much entertained them, than afford him a Ship and a ſafe Convoy, which was of little expence or trouble to them.

When he arrived, his long Abſence, and the Travels which had diſfigured him, made him altogether unknown; and the Danger he would have incurred, had he diſcovered himſelf too ſoon, forced him to a Diſguiſe: Laſtly, This Diſguiſe gave him an opportunity of ſurprizing thoſe young Suitors,

tors, who for ſeveral years together had been accuſtomed to nothing but to ſleep well, and fare daintily.

It was from theſe Examples that *Ariſtotle* drew this Rule, "that Whatever concludes the Poem "ſhould ſo ſpring from the very Conſtitution of "the Fable, as if it were a *neceſſary*, or at leaſt a "*probable* conſequence."

SECT. VI.

* The *Time* of the Epic Action is not fixed, like that of the Dramatic Poem: It is much longer, for an uninterrupted Duration is much more neceſſary in an Action which one ſees and is preſent at, than in one which we only read or hear repeated. Beſides Tragedy is fuller of Paſſion, and conſequently of ſuch a Violence as cannot admit of ſo long a Duration.

The *Iliad* containing an Action of *Anger* and *Violence*, the Poet allows it but a ſhort time, about *forty Days*. The Deſign of the *Odyſſey* required another Conduct; the Character of the Hero is *Prudence* and *Long-ſuffering*; therefore the Time of its Duration is much longer, above *eight Years*.

† The *Paſſions* of Tragedy are different from thoſe of the Epic Poem. In the former, *Terror* and *Pity* have the chief place; the Paſſion that ſeems moſt peculiar to Epic Poetry, is *Admiration*.

Beſides this *Admiration*, which in general diſtinguiſhes the Epic Poem from the Dramatic; each Epic Poem has likewiſe ſome peculiar *Paſſion*, which diſtinguiſhes it in particular from other Epic

* *The Time of the Action.* † *The Paſſions of the Epic Poem.*

Poems, and conſtitutes a kind of ſingular and individual difference between theſe Poems of the ſame Species. Theſe ſingular Paſſions correſpond to the *Character* of the *Hero*. *Anger* and *Terror* reign throughout the *Iliad*, becauſe *Achilles* is angry, and the moſt Terrible of all Men. The *Æneid* has all *ſoft* and *tender Paſſions*, becauſe that is the Character of *Æneas*. The Prudence, Wiſdom and Conſtancy of *Ulyſſes* do not allow him either of theſe Extremes, therefore the Poet does not permit one of them to be predominant in the *Odyſſey*. He confines himſelf to *Admiration* only, which he carries to an higher pitch than in the *Iliad*; And it is upon this account that he introduces a great many more Machines in the *Odyſſey* into the Body of the Action, than are to be ſeen in the Actions of the other two Poems.

* The *Manners* of the Epic Poem ought to be *poetically good*, but it is not neceſſary they be always *morally* ſo. They are poetically good, when one may diſcover the Virtue or Vice, the good or ill Inclinations, of every one who ſpeaks or acts: They are poetically bad, when Perſons are made to ſpeak or act out of Character, or inconſiſtently or unequally. The Manners of *Æneas* and of *Mezentius* are equally good, conſidered poetically, becauſe they equally demonſtrate the Piety of the one, and the Impiety of the other.

† It is requiſite to make the ſame diſtinction between a Hero in Morality, and a Hero in Poetry, as between moral and poetical Goodneſs. *Achilles* had as much right to the latter as *Æneas*. *Ariſtotle* ſays, that the Hero of a Poem ſhould be neither good nor bad; neither advanced above the reſt of mankind

* *The Manners.* † *Character of the Hero.*

mankind by his Virtues, or ſunk beneath them by his Vices; that he may be the proper and fuller example to others, both what to imitate and what to decline.

The other Qualifications of the *Manners* are, that they be *ſuitable* to the Cauſes which either raiſe or diſcover them in the Perſons; that they have an exact *Reſemblance* to what Hiſtory or Fable have delivered of thoſe Perſons to whom they are aſcribed; and that there be an *Equality* in them, ſo that no man is made to act or ſpeak out of his character.

* But this Equality is not ſufficient for the *Unity of the Character*; it is further neceſſary that the ſame Spirit appear in all ſort of Encounters. Thus *Æneas* acting with great *Piety* and *Mildneſs* in the firſt part of the *Æneid*, which requires no other Character; and afterwards appearing illuſtrious in heroic valour in the wars of the ſecond part, but there, without any appearance either of a hard or a ſoft diſpoſition, would doubtleſs be far from offending againſt the *Equality* of the Manners: But yet there would be no *Simplicity* or *Unity* in the Character. So that beſides the qualities that claim their particular place upon different occaſions, there muſt be one appearing throughout, which commands over all the reſt; and without this we may affirm it is no Character.

One may indeed make a Hero as valiant as *Achilles*, as pious as *Æneas*, and as prudent as *Ulyſſes*. But it is a meer Chimæra to imagine a Hero that has the Valour of *Achilles*, the Piety of *Æneas*, and the Prudence of *Ulyſſes*, at one and the ſame time. This Viſion might happen to an Author, who would

* *Unity of the Character.*

ſuit the character of a Hero to whatever each part of the Action might naturally require, without regarding the Eſſence of the Fable, or the Unity of the Character in the ſame perſon upon all ſorts of occaſions: This Hero would be the mildeſt, beſt-natur'd Prince in the World, and alſo the moſt choleric, hard-hearted and implacable creature imaginable; he would be extreamly tender like *Æneas*, extreamly violent like *Achilles*, and yet have the indifference of *Ulyſſes*, that is incapable of the two extremes. Would it not be in vain for the Poet to call this Perſon by the ſame name throughout?

Let us reflect on the effects it would produce in ſeveral Poems, whoſe Authors were of opinion, that the chief character of a Hero is that of an accompliſhed man. They would be all alike, all valiant in Battle, prudent in Council, pious in the Acts of Religion, courteous, civil, magnificent; and laſtly endued with all the prodigious Virtues any Poet could invent. All this would be independent from the Action and the Subject of the Poem; and upon ſeeing each Hero ſeparated from the reſt of the work, we ſhould not eaſily gueſs, to what Action and to what Poem the Hero belonged? So that we ſhould ſee that none of thoſe would have a Character, ſince the Character is that which makes a perſon diſcernible, and which diſtinguiſhes him from all others.

This commanding Quality in *Achilles* is his Anger, in *Ulyſſes* the art of Diſſimulation, in *Æneas* Meekneſs. Each of theſe may be ſtiled, by way of eminence, the Character in theſe Heroes.

But theſe Characters cannot be alone. It is abſolutely neceſſary that ſome other ſhould give them a luſtre, and embelliſh them as far as they are capable;

ble: Either by hiding the defects that are in each, by ſome noble and ſhining Qualities; as the Poet has done the Anger of *Achilles*, by ſhading it with extraordinary Valour: Or by making them entirely of the nature of a true and ſolid Virtue, as is to be obſerved in the two others. The Diſſimulation of *Ulyſſes* is a part of his Prudence; and the Meekneſs of *Æneas* is wholly employed in ſubmitting his will to the Gods. For the making up this Union, our Poets have joined together ſuch Qualities as are by nature the moſt compatible; *Valour* with *Anger*, *Meekneſs* with *Piety*, and *Prudence* with *Diſſimulation*. This laſt Union was neceſſary for the Goodneſs of *Ulyſſes*; for without that, his Diſſimulation might have degenerated into Wickedneſs and Double-dealing.

SECT. VII.

* WE come now to the *Machines* of the Epic Poem. The chief Paſſion which it aims to excite being *Admiration*, nothing is ſo conducive to that as the *Marvellous*; and the importance and dignity of the Action is by nothing ſo greatly elevated as by the *Care and Interpoſition of Heav'n*.

The Machines are of three ſorts. Some are *Theological*, and were invented to explain the nature of God. Others are *Phyſical*, and repreſent things of Nature. The laſt are *Moral*, and are the Images of Virtues and Vices.

Homer and the Antients have given to their Deities the Manners, Paſſions, and Vices of Men. Their Poems are wholly Allegorical; and in this view it is eaſier to defend *Homer* than to blame him. We cannot accuſe him for making mention of many

* *Of the Machinery.*

Gods, for his beſtowing Paſſions upon them, or even introducing them fighting againſt men. The Scripture uſes the like figures and expreſſions.

If it be allowable to ſpeak thus of the Gods in *Theology*, much more in the Fictions of *Natural Philoſophy*, where, if a Poet deſcribes the Deities, he muſt give them ſuch Manners, Speeches, and Actions as are conformable to the nature of the things they repreſent under thoſe Divinities. The caſe is the ſame in *Moral* Deities: *Minerva* is wiſe becauſe ſhe repreſents Prudence; *Venus* is both good or bad, becauſe the Paſſion of Love is capable of theſe contrary qualities.

Since among the Gods of a Poem ſome are good, ſome bad, and ſome indifferently either; and ſince of our Paſſions we make ſo many allegorical Deities; one may attribute to the *Gods* all that is done in the Poem, whether good or evil. But theſe Deities do not act conſtantly in one and the ſame manner.

Sometimes they act inviſibly, and by meer Inſpiration; which has nothing in it extraordinary or miraculous: being no more than what we ſay every day, "That ſome God has aſſiſted us, or ſome "Dæmon has inſtigated us.

At other times they appear viſibly, and manifeſt themſelves to men, in a manner altogether miraculous and præternatural.

The third way has ſomething of both the others; it is in truth a miracle, but is not commonly ſo acounted: This includes Dreams, Oracles, *&c.*

All theſe ways muſt be *Probable*; for ſo neceſſary as the Marvellous is to the Epic Action, as nothing is ſo conducive to Admiration; yet we can on the other hand admire nothing that we think impoſſible. Though the Probability of theſe Machines be of a very

very large extent, (ſince it is founded upon Divine Power) it is not without limitations. There are numerous Inſtances of allowable and probable Machines in the Epic Poems, where the Gods are no leſs Actors than the Men. But the leſs credible ſort, ſuch as *Metamorphoſes*, &c. are far more rare.

This ſuggeſts a Reflection on the Method of rendring thoſe Machines probable, which in their own nature are hardly ſo. Thoſe which require only *Divine Probability*, ſhould be ſo diſengaged from the Action, that one might ſubſtract them from it without deſtroying the Action. But thoſe which are eſſential and neceſſary, ſhould be grounded upon *Human Probability*, and not on the ſole Power of God. Thus the Epiſodes of *Circe*, the *Syrens*, *Polyphemus*, &c. are neceſſary to the Action of the *Odyſſey*, and yet not humanly probable: Yet *Homer* has artificially reduced them to human Probability, by the Simplicity and Ignorance of the *Phæacians*, before whom he cauſes thoſe recitals to be made.

The next Queſtion is, Where, and on what occaſions Machines may be uſed? It is certain *Homer* and *Virgil* make uſe of them every where, and ſcarce ſuffer any Action to be performed without them. *Petronius* makes this a Precept: *Per ambages, deorumque miniſteria, &c.* The Gods are mentioned in the very *Propoſition* of their Works, the *Invocation* is addreſt to them, and the whole *Narration* is full of them. The Gods are the *Cauſes* of the Action, they form the *Intrigue*, and bring about the *Solution*. The precept of *Ariſtotle* and *Horace*, that the Unravelling of the Plot ſhould not proceed from a Miracle or the appearance of a God, has place only in Dramatic Poetry, not in the Epic. For it is plain

that both in the Solution of the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey* the Gods are concerned. In the former, the Deities meet to appeaſe the Anger of *Achilles*: *Iris* and *Mercury* are ſent to that purpoſe, and *Minerva* eminently aſſiſts *Achilles* in the deciſive combat with *Hector*. In the *Odyſſey*, the ſame Goddeſs fights cloſe by *Ulyſſes* againſt the Suitors, and concludes that Peace betwixt him and the *Ithacenſians*, which compleats the Poem.

We may therefore determine, that a Machine is not an Invention to extricate the Poet out of any difficulty which embarraſſes him. But that the Preſence of a Divinity, and ſome Action ſurprizing and extraordinary, are inſerted into almoſt all the parts of his work, in order to render it more Majeſtic and more Admirable. But this mixture ought to be ſo made, that the Machines might be retrenched without taking any thing from the Action. At the ſame time it gives the Readers a leſſon of Piety and Virtue; and teaches them, that the moſt brave and the moſt wiſe can do nothing, and attain nothing great and glorious, without the aſſiſtance of Heaven. Thus the Machinery crowns the whole work, and renders it at once, *Marvellous*, *Probable*, and *Moral*.

THE

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

The ARGUMENT.

Minerva's Deſcent to *Ithaca*.

The Poem opens within forty-eight days of the arrival of Ulyſſes *in his dominions. He had now remained ſeven years in the iſland of* Calypſo, *when the Gods aſſembled in council propoſed the method of his departure from thence, and his return to his native country. For this purpoſe it is concluded to ſend* Mercury *to* Calypſo, *and* Pallas *immediately deſcends to* Ithaca. *She holds a conference with* Telemachus, *in the ſhape of* Mentes *King of the* Taphians; *in which ſhe adviſes him to take a journey in queſt of his Father* Ulyſſes, *to* Pylos *and* Sparta, *where* Neſtor *and* Menelaus *yet reigned: then, after having viſibly diſplayed her divinity, diſappears. The ſuitors of* Penelope *make great entertainments, and riot in her palace till night.* Phemius *ſings to them the return of the* Grecians, *till* Penelope *puts a ſtop to the ſong. Some words ariſe between the ſuitors and* Telemachus, *who ſummons the council to meet the day following.*

MUSEUM

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MUSEUM

The Gods *consult about* Ulysses's *departure from* Calypso.

P. Fourdrinier Sculp.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE Man, for Wiſdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, oh Muſe! reſound:
Who, when his arms had wrought the deſtin'd fall
Of ſacred *Troy*, and raz'd her heav'n-built wall,
Wand'ring

NOTES.

We ſhall proceed in the ſame method through the courſe of theſe Annotations upon the *Odyſſey*, as in thoſe upon the *Iliad*; conſidering *Homer* chiefly as a Poet, endeavouring to make his beauties *underſtood*, and not to praiſe without a reaſon given. It is equally an extreme,

Wand'ring from clime to clime, obſervant ſtray'd, 5
Their Manners noted, and their States ſurvey'd.

On

extreme, on the one hand to think *Homer* has no human defects; and on the other to dwell ſo much upon thoſe defects, as to depreciate his beauties. The greater part of Criticks form a general character, from the obſervation of particular errors, taken in their own oblique or imperfect views; which is as unjuſt, as to make a judgment of the beauty of a man's body from the ſhadow it happens to caſt, in ſuch or ſuch a poſition. To convince the Reader of this intended impartiality, we readily allow the *Odyſſey* to be inferior to the *Iliad* in many reſpects. It has not that ſublimity of ſpirit, or that enthuſiaſm of poetry; but then it muſt be allowed, if it be leſs noble, it is more inſtructive: The other abounds with more Heroiſm, this with more Morality. The *Iliad* gives us a draught of Gods and Heroes, of diſcord, of contentions, and ſcenes of ſlaughter; the *Odyſſey* ſets before us a ſcene more amiable, the landſchapes of nature; the pleaſures of private life, the duties of every ſtation, the hoſpitality of antient times; a leſs buſy, but more agreeable portrait. The *Iliad* concludes with the ruin, the *Odyſſey* with the happineſs of a nation. *Horace* was of the ſame opinion, as is evident from the epiſtle to *Lollius*.

Seditione, dolis, ſcelere, atque libidine, & ira,
Iliacos *intra muros peccatur & extra.*
Rurſus, quid virtus & quid ſapientia poſſit,
Utile proposuit nobis exemplar Ulyſſem.

V. 1. *The Man, for Wiſdom, &c.*] *Homer* opens this Poem with the utmoſt ſimplicity and modeſty; he continually grows upon the reader,

Non fumum ex fulgore, ſed ex fumo dare lucem
Cogitat, ut ſpeciſa dehinc miracula promat.

Cicero lays this down as a rule for the Orator, *principia verecunda, non elatis intenſa verbis*; and *Horace* for the Poet, *Nec ſic incipies, &c.* He propoſes the beginning of the *Odyſſey* as a pattern for all future poems, and has tranſlated them in his Art of poetry.

Dic mihi, Muſa, virum, captæ poſt tempora Trojæ,
Qui mores hominum multorum vidit, & urbes.

May

On ſtormy ſeas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal ſhore:
Vain

May I be forgiven the arrogance, if I ſhould offer a criticiſm upon this tranſlation? The *ſufferings* of *Ulyſſes* are the ſubject of the whole *Odyſſey*, and yet *Horace* has omitted the mention of thoſe ſufferings: ὃς μάλα πολλὰ πλάγχθη. There is another word alſo which ſeems eſſential, that is, πολύτροπος, this is likewiſe omitted. For the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes*, and the wiſdom by which he extricated himſelf from them, enter into the very deſign of the Poem. But indeed in another place he has plainly had regard to all theſe circumſtances.

Qui domitor Trojæ, *multorum providus urbes*
Et mores hominum inſpexit, latumque per æquor
Dum ſibi, dum ſociis, reditum parat, aſpera multa
Pertulit———— *Epiſt. ad Lolli.*

I muſt alſo refute a criticiſm of *Rapin*, who will have it that the word πολύτροπος includes a character of craft and low cunning, unworthy of a brave ſpirit: But *Euſtathius* admirably vindicates the Poet in this reſpect; he ſhews us that τρόπος no where in *Homer* ſignifies (ἤθη) or Morals; and that it implies a man who could accommodate himſelf to every condition of life; one who in the worſt eſtate had ſtill a reſerve to free himſelf from it; it therefore, ſays he, ſignifies a man that through experience has learned wiſdom. I have likewiſe the authority of *Horace* for this ſenſe, in the above-cited paſſage,

Qui domitor Trojæ, multorum providus urbes.

I take *providus* in this place to ſignify not only a man who noted the manners of various nations with care, but alſo one who in calamity could foreſee methods to extricate himſelf from it. And ſurely nothing can be more unjuſt than what *Rapin* objects againſt *Ulyſſes*, in employing his wiſdom only in his own preſervation, while all his companions were loſt: *Homer* himſelf ſufficiently refutes this objection, and directly tells us, that he employed his wiſdom in the care of their ſafety, but that they through their folly defeated his wiſdom. The words of *Homer*, ſays *Euſtathius*, ſhow that a wiſe man neglects not his friends in adverſity. But, ſays *Rapin*, what could oblige *Homer* to begin with ſo diſhonourable an action, and

place

Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On Herds devoted to the God of Day;

The

place the greateſt weakneſs of his Hero in the very frontiſpiece of his Poem? and invoke his Muſe to ſing the man who with difficulty ſaved himſelf, and ſuffered his companions to be deſtroyed? There had been ſome weight in this objection, if *Ulyſſes* had ſaved his own, with the loſs of their lives; but I cannot ſee any diſhonour in his preſerving himſelf by wiſdom, when they deſtroyed themſelves by folly: It was chiefly by ſtorms that they periſhed; it can be no imputation to his character, not to be able to reſtrain the effects of a tempeſt: he did all that a wiſe man could do, he gave them ſuch admonitions upon every emergency, that if they had purſued them, they had been preſerved as well as *Ulyſſes*.

V. 1. *For Wiſdom's various arts renown'd.*] *Boſſu*'s obſervation in relation to this Epithet πολύτροπος, given to *Ulyſſes*, is worth tranſcribing. The Fable of the *Odyſſey* (ſays he) is wholly for the conduct and policy of a State: Therefore the quality it requires is *Wiſdom*; but this virtue is of too large an extent for the ſimplicity which a juſt and preciſe *character* requires; it is therefore requiſite it ſhould be limited. The great art of Kings is the myſtery of *Diſſimulation*. It is well known, that *Lewis* the eleventh, for the inſtruction of his ſon, reduced all the *Latin language* to theſe words only, *viz. Qui neſcit diſſimulare neſcit regnare*. It was likewiſe by this practice that *Saul* began his reign, when he was firſt elected, and as yet full of the ſpirit of God. The firſt thing we read of him in holy writ is, * that he made as if he did not hear the words which ſeditious people ſpoke againſt him.

This then is the *character* which the *Greek* Poet gives his *Ulyſſes* in the Propoſition of his Poem, he calls him ἄνδρα πολύτροπον; to denote this prudent diſſimulation, which diſguiſed him ſo many ways, and put him upon taking ſo many ſhapes.

Without mentioning any thing of *Circe*, who detained him with her a whole year, and who was famous for the tranſformations ſhe made of all ſorts of perſons; the reader finds him at firſt with *Calypſo* the daughter of wiſe *Atlas*, who bore up the vaſt pillars that reached from earth to heaven, and whoſe knowledge penetrated into the depths of the unfathomable Ocean: that is to ſay, who was ignorant of nothing in Heaven, Earth or Sea. And as the firſt product and principal part of ſo high, ſo ſolid, and ſo profound a

* *Ille vero diſſimulabat ſe audire.* Reg. lib. 1

knowledge,

The God vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah men unbleſs'd!) to touch that natal ſhore.

Oh

knowledge, was to know how to conceal one's ſelf; this wiſe man called his daughter by a name that ſignified a * *ſecret*. The Poet makes his Hero, whom he deſigned for a Politician, to ſtay ſeven whole years with this Nymph. She taught him ſo well, that afterwards he loſt no opportunity of putting her leſſons in practice: for he does nothing without a diſguiſe. At his parting from *Ogygia* he is caſt upon the Iſle of *Phæacia*: as kind as his reception was, yet he ſtays till the night before he went off ere he would diſcover himſelf. From thence he goes to *Ithaca*: the firſt adventure that happened to him there was with *Minerva*, the moſt prudent among the Deities, as *Ulyſſes* was the moſt prudent among men. She ſays ſo expreſly in that very paſſage. Nor did they fail to diſguiſe themſelves. *Minerva* takes upon her the ſhape of a ſhepherd, and *Ulyſſes* tells her he was obliged to fly from *Crete*, becauſe he had murdered the ſon of King *Idomeneus*. The Goddeſs diſcovers herſelf firſt, and commends him particularly, becauſe theſe artifices were ſo eaſy and natural to him, that they ſeemed to be born with him. Afterwards the Hero under the form of a beggar deceives firſt of all *Eumæus*, then his ſon, and laſt of all his wife and every body elſe, till he found an opportunity of puniſhing his Enemies, to whom he diſcovered not himſelf till he killed them, namely on the laſt night. After his diſcovering himſelf in the Palace, he goes the next day to deceive his father, appearing at firſt under a borrowed name; before he would give him joy of his return. Thus he takes upon him all manner of ſhapes, and diſſembles to the very laſt. But the Poet joins to this character a valour and a conſtancy which render him invincible in the moſt daring and deſperate adventures.

V. 3. *Who, when his arms had wrought the deſtin'd fall*
Of ſacred Troy——————]

Whence is it that *Ulyſſes* is ſaid to have overthrown *Troy*? and not *Achilles*, who was of more remarkable courage than *Ulyſſes*? *Euſtathius* tells us, that the deſtruction of *Troy* ought to be aſcribed chiefly to *Ulyſſes*, as he not only took away the *Palladium*, but was the inventor of the ſtratagem of the wooden horſe, by which that city was conquered. *Virgil* in his ſecond book of the *Æneis* gives us a noble deſcription of its deſtruction, by which we find that *Ulyſſes* was not only the contriver of its ruin, but bore a great ſhare in the actions of the night in which that city was overturned.

* Καλυψω.

V. 9.

Oh ſnatch ſome portion of theſe acts from fate,
Celeſtial Muſe! and to our world relate.
Now at their native realms the *Greeks* arriv'd;
All who the wars of ten long years ſurviv'd,
And

V. 9. *Vain toils! their impious folly, &c.*] By this ſingle trait, *Homer* marks an eſſential difference between the *Iliad* and the *Odyſſey*; namely, that in the former Poem the people periſhed by the folly of their Kings:

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

In this, the people periſh by their own folly, while their Prince omits nothing to procure their felicity. A plain reaſon why the *Odyſſey* is more calculated for the people, than the *Iliad*. *Dacier.*

V. 13. *Oh ſnatch ſome portion of theſe acts from fate.*] It may be aſked why the Poet invokes the Muſe to recount only part of the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes*? and why theſe words, *To Ulyſſes*, are inſerted? To the firſt it may be anſwered, that an heroic Poem dwells chiefly upon incidents of importance, and paſſes over every thing that does not contribute to raiſe our idea of the Hero, or to the main deſign of the Poem: To the other *Euſtathius* anſwers ſeveral ways: either, ſays he, the word *καὶ* is to be taken as an expletive, as it is in a thouſand places in *Homer*; or it means that this is a ſubject ſo conſiderable, that it will be a theme to many Poets: or that being a true Hiſtory it had ſpread over many nations of the world, and that *Homer* himſelf received the ſtory of the Poem from *Ægypt*; and then the meaning will be, "Sing, oh Muſe, to the *Greeks* as well "as to other nations, the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes*." I ſhould prefer the firſt as being the moſt natural: the reſt ſeem forced, and conſequently improper for the opening of a Poem, where the utmoſt plainneſs is neceſſary; eſpecially, if we conſider that *Ulyſſes* was a *Grecian*, and it is not probable that the *Grecians* ſhould be the leaſt acquainted with the ſtory, or the laſteſt to celebrate the actions, of a *Grecian*.

V. 15. *Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd.*] It is neceſſary for the better underſtanding of the Poem, to fix the period of Time from which it takes its beginning: *Homer*, as *Euſtathius* obſerves, does not begin with the wandrings of *Ulyſſes*; he ſteps at once into the latter end of his actions, and leaves the preceding ſtory to be told by way of narration. Thus in his *Iliad*, he dates his Poem from the anger of *Achilles*, which happened almoſt at the concluſion

And 'ſcap'd the perils of the gulfy Main.
Ulyſſes, ſole of all the victor train,
An exile from his dear paternal coaſt,
Deplor'd his abſent Queen, and Empire loſt.
Calypſo in her caves conſtrain'd his ſtay,
With ſweet, reluctant, amorous delay:
In vain —— for now the circling years diſcloſe
The day predeſtin'd to reward his woes.
At length his *Ithaca* is giv'n by Fate,
Where yet new labours his arrival wait;

concluſion of the *Trojan* war. From hence *Horace* drew his obſervation in his *Arte Poet.*

Semper ad eventum feſtinat; & in medias res,
Non ſecus ac notas, auditorem rapit.

There are but forty-eight days from the departure of *Ulyſſes* from *Calypſo*, to his diſcovery in *Ithaca*; he had been one year with *Circe*, and ſeven with *Calypſo*, when the Gods diſpatched *Mercury* to that Goddeſs; from which point of time we are to date the *Odyſſey*.

This obſervation gives a reaſon why the Poet invokes the Muſe to recount the wanderings of this Hero in part only; for *Ulyſſes*, as appears from the beginning of the ninth book, after he left the ſhores of *Troy*, was driven to *Ismarus* of the *Ciconians*. An Hiſtorian muſt have begun from the fall of *Troy*, and related his wanderings with truth and order; for Hiſtory is chiefly for inſtruction: But a Poet takes another method, and diſpoſes every circumſtance arbitrarily; he chuſes or rejects, as ſuits beſt with his principal deſign, and in ſuch a manner as to give at once delight and inſtruction.

V. 21. Calypſo *in her Caves conſtrain'd his ſtay.*] To the Remark before cited of *Euſtathius*, upon the abode of *Ulyſſes* with *Calypſo*, may be added this of the Abbé *Fraguier*: that his reſiding ſeven years in the caves of *Calypſo* (the Goddeſs of Secrecy) may only mean that he remained ſo long hid from the knowledge and inquiry of all men; or that whatever befel him in all that time, was loſt to Hiſtory, or made no part in the Poem.

At

At length their rage the hoſtile Pow'rs reſtrain,
All but the ruthleſs Monarch of the Main.
But now the God, remote, a heav'nly gueſt
In *Æthiopia* grac'd the genial feaſt,
(A race divided, whom with ſloping rays
The riſing and deſcending Sun ſurveys)
There on the world's extreameſt verge rever'd,
With Hecatombs and pray'r in pomp prefer'd,

V. 28. *All but the ruthleſs Monarch of the Main.*] It may be aſked why *Neptune* is thus enraged againſt *Ulyſſes*? *Homer* himſelf tells us, it was becauſe that Hero had put out the Eye of his Son *Cyclops*. But if we take *Neptune* by way of Allegory for the Ocean, the paſſage implies, that the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes* were chiefly by ſea; and therefore poetry, which adds a grandeur to the meaneſt circumſtance, introduces the God of it as his greateſt enemy. *Euſtathius.*

V. 30. *In Æthiopia, &c.*] *Strabo* in his firſt book delivers his opinion, that "the ancient *Greeians* included all thoſe people who "lived upon the ſouthern Ocean, from eaſt to weſt, in the general "name of *Æthiopians*, and that it was not confined to thoſe only "who lay ſouth of *Ægypt*." *Ptolomy* ſays, that under the "Zo"diac, from eaſt to weſt, inhabit the *Æthiopians*, black of colour." And elſewhere the ſame Geographer divides *Æthiopia* into the eaſtern and the weſtern. Theſe eaſtern and weſtern *Æthiopians* were ſeparated by the *Arabian* or *Ægyptian* Gulf; which though never mentioned by *Homer*, as *Ariſtarchus* remarked, yet it is not probable (ſays *Strabo*) that he ſhould be ignorant of it, it being but a thouſand ſtadia diſtant from the *Mediterranean*, when he knew the *Egyptian Thebes*, which was four times as far off. *Strab. Plin. Spondan.*

I will not repeat what was obſerved upon the Gods being gone to the *Æthiopians*, in the firſt book of the *Iliad*; it is ſufficient in general to obſerve, that the *Æthiopians* were a people very religious towards the Gods, and that they held a pompous feaſt twelve Days annually to their honour; and in particular, that the Poet very judiciouſly makes uſe of this ſolemnity to remove *Neptune* out of the way, who was the enemy of *Ulyſſes*, that he may with the greater ſecurity bring off his Hero from *Calypſo*'s Iſland. *Euſtathius.*

Diſtant he lay: while in the bright abodes
Of high *Olympus*, *Jove* conven'd the Gods:
Th' aſſembly thus the Sire ſupreme addreſt,
Ægyſthus' fate revolving in his breaſt,
Whom young *Oreſtes* to the dreary coaſt
Of *Pluto* ſent, a blood-polluted Ghoſt.

Perverſe Mankind! whoſe Wills, created free,
Charge all their woes on abſolute Decree:
All to the dooming Gods their guilt tranſlate,
And Follies are miſcall'd the Crimes of Fate.
When to his luſt *Ægyſthus* gave the rein,
Did Fate, or We, th' adult'rous act conſtrain?

Did

V. 41. *Jupiter's ſpeech.*] The ſolemnity and ſententiouſneſs of this ſpeech is taken notice of by *Euſtathius*; and ſurely Poetry muſt be highly valuable, when it delivers ſuch excellent inſtructions: It contained the whole of religion amongſt the ancients; and made Philoſophy more agreeable. This paſſage is an inſtance of it, a paſſage worthy of a Chriſtian; it ſhews us that the Supreme Being is ſovereignly good; that he rewards the juſt, and puniſhes the unjuſt; and that the folly of man, and not the Decree of Heaven, is the cauſe of human calamity.

V. 45. *Ægyſthus.*] It is difficult to find a reaſon why, in the original, *Jupiter* ſhould give ſuch an honourable appellation to *Ægyſthus*, as ἀμύμονος, *unblameable*, who had diſhonoured the bed of *Agamemnon*, and taken his life away; eſpecially in that very inſtant when he condemns the Fact with ſo great ſolemnity: *Euſtathius* ſays, that *Homer*, an enemy to cenſure and invective, introduces that God as having reſpect only to his good qualities, and commending him for his general character; and adds that it had been an indecency in the Poet to have given countenance to that baſe cuſtom by the authority of *Jupiter*. *Dacier* is not ſatisfied with this reaſon, and tells us that *Homer* gives *Ægyſthus* this title, to vindicate *Jupiter* from the imputation of his crimes: He gives us to underſtand that Heaven is not the cauſe of man's failings; that he is by Creation able to act virtuouſly, and that it is through his own miſconduct that he deviates

into

Did Fate, or We, when great *Atrides* dy'd,
Urge the bold traitor to the Regicide?
Hermes I ſent, while yet his ſoul remain'd
Sincere from royal blood, and faith profan'd;
To

into evil; and therefore the meaning is this; "*Jupiter* calling to "mind *Ægyſthus*, that *Ægyſthus* whom he had created wiſe and "virtuous, and made capable to ſuſtain that character." And this agrees admirably with the beginning of the ſpeech of *Jupiter*, who there vindicates his own Divinity.

But if this ſhould ſeem too refined, it may be ſufficient to take the word in that good ſenſe which *Ægyſthus* might have deſerved for many good qualities: Thus *Achilles* is called the *ſwift of foot*, even while he ſtands, or ſleeps; the firſt being his general character. It may be further confirmed by a paſſage ſomething reſembling it in the holy Scriptures: The *Ægyptian* midwives were guilty of a lye to *Pharaoh*, and yet God pardons it, and bleſſes them: He bleſſes them not becauſe they lyed, but becauſe they preſerved the children of the *Iſraelites*.

V. 49. Hermes I ſent, &c.] It would be endleſs to obſerve every moral paſſage in the *Odyſſey*, the whole of it being but one leſſon of Morality. But ſurely it muſt be a pleaſure to the Reader to learn what notions the ancients had of a Deity, from the oldeſt book extant, except the book of *Moſes*.

Jupiter here declares that he never fails to warn mankind from evil, and that he had ſent *Mercury* for this purpoſe to *Ægyſthus*. It may be aſked what is this *Mercury* whom *Jupiter* ſends? It is the light of Nature, which Heaven implants in the breaſt of every man: and which, as *Cicero* ſays, is not only more ancient than the world, but co-eval with the Maſter of the world himſelf. He writes to this effect. *There was from the beginning ſuch a thing as Reaſon, a direct emanation from Nature itſelf, which prompted to good, and averted from evil. A Reaſon which did not then become a law, when it was firſt reduced to writing, but was ſo even from the moment it exiſted, and it exiſted from ever, of an equal date with the divine Intelligence: It is the true and primordial Law, proper to command and to forbid, it is the Reaſon of the great* Jupiter.

That Reaſon of the ſupreme Being, is here called *Mercury*; that Reaſon flowing from God, which is conſtantly dictating to the moſt corrupted hearts, *this is good*, or *this is evil*. Hence aroſe an ancient Proverb, recorded by *Simplicius*, *Reaſon is a Mercury to all men*. *Epictetus* [lib. 3. Arrian.] ſays, Apollo knew that Laius would not

obey

To warn the wretch, that young *Oreſtes* grown
To manly years ſhould re-aſſert the throne.
Yet impotent of mind, and uncontrol'd,
He plung'd into the gulf which Heav'n foretold.
Here paus'd the God, and penſive thus replies
Minerva graceful with her azure eyes.
O thou! from whom the whole creation ſprings,
The ſource of pow'r on earth deriv'd to Kings!
His death was equal to the direful deed;
So may the Man of blood be doom'd to bleed!
But grief and rage alternate wound my breaſt
For brave *Ulyſſes*, ſtill by Fate oppreſt.
Amidſt an Iſle, around whoſe rocky ſhore
The foreſts murmur, and the ſurges roar,

obey his Oracle. Apollo nevertheleſs did not neglect to propheſy to Laius *thoſe evils that threatened him. The goodneſs of the Divinity never fails to adverti ſe mankind; that ſource of truth is ever open and free: but men are ever incredulous, diſobedient and rebellious.* Dacier.

V. 57. Minerva's *ſpeech.*] It may be aſked what relation *Ulyſſes* has to *Ægyſthus*, that the mention of the one ſhould immediately give occaſion for the remembrance of the other? and it may appear unnatural in the Poet to give riſe to his Poem by ſo unexpected a tranſition from *Ægyſthus* to *Ulyſſes*. *Euſtathius* vindicates *Homer*, by ſhewing that it is not only beautiful but natural, to take riſe from what offers itſelf to our immediate obſervation. What can be more natural, when *Jupiter* is relating how he puniſhes the wicked, than for Wiſdom or *Minerva* to ſuggeſt, that the good ought to be rewarded? There is no forced introduction; no artful preparation, but the whole ariſes from the occaſion, which is a great beauty. *Euſtathius.*

V. 63. *Amidſt an Iſle*, &c.] There was, according to true Hiſtory, ſuch an Iſland of *Calypſo*, of which *Strabo* writes; that *Solon* gives an account of the Iſland *Atlantis* bordering upon *Ægypt*, and that he went thither to make inquiry, and learned that an Iſland was once there, but by time was vaniſhed. *Euſtathius.*

The blameleſs hero from his wiſh'd for home
A Goddeſs guards in her inchanted dome.
(*Atlas* her ſire, to whoſe far-piercing eye
The wonders of the deep expanded lie;
Th' eternal

V. 67. Atlas *her ſire, to whoſe far-piercing eye*
The wonders of the deep expanded lie;
Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the ſtarry vault, and prop the Spheres.]

Atlas is here ſaid to underſtand all the depths of the ſea: but the Epithet ὀλοόφρονος applied to him, has two different ſignifications. It implies either, *one whoſe thoughts are full of terrible and diſmal things*, or *one who has infinite knowledge and unbounded views*, and it is doubtful which of them *Homer* means. To reconcile both, may we not think our Author had heard ſomething of the ancient tradition which makes *Atlas* the ſame perſon with *Enoch*, and repreſents him as a great aſtronomer, who propheſied of the univerſal deluge, and exhorted mankind to repentance? Therefore he named his ſon *Methuſelah*, to ſhew that after his death the waters ſhould overſpread the face of the earth. His continual lamentations on this occaſion cauſed him to be called the *Weeper*; for the world is always an enemy to melancholy predictions. Thus *Homer* upon the credit of this Tradition might very well call *Atlas*, *one whoſe thoughts ran upon diſmal things, or one whoſe views and cares were vaſtly extended.*

I inſiſt no otherwiſe upon this, but as a conjecture, yet it is further ſtrengthened by what follows in the next lines: *That* Atlas *ſuſtains thoſe Columns, which being fixed upon the earth ſupport the Heavens.* This is generally interpreted of his great ſkill in Aſtronomy and Geography. But may not the reaſon be more particular? Since *Atlas* or *Enoch* had propheſied of the Deluge, and ſince that prediction was looked upon as the effect of his ſkill in Aſtronomy; might it not be ſaid he knew the abyſſes of the Sea, and ſuſtained the pillars of Heaven, to expreſs that he knew how the fountains of the deep, and the waters above the Heavens ſhould unite to drown the earth?

As to the image of the *pillars of Heaven*, it is frequent in the ſacred books, and uſed to expreſs the height of vaſt mountains. (*Pindar* calls *Aetna* the οὐρανίαν κίονα:) and there might probably be ſomething more particular that furniſhed *Homer* with this idea; I mean the pillars of *Hercules*, well-known in his time, and neighbouring to the mountain he deſcribes. *Dacier.*

See

Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the ſtarry vault, and prop the ſpheres.)
By his fair daughter is the chief confin'd,
Who ſooths to dear delight his anxious mind:
Succeſsleſs all her ſoft careſſes prove,
To baniſh from his breaſt his Country's love;
To ſee the ſmoke from his lov'd palace riſe,
While the dear iſle in diſtant proſpect lies,
With what contentment could he cloſe his eyes?
And will Omnipotence neglect to ſave
The ſuffering virtue of the wiſe and brave?

See the deſcription of this mountain in the fourth book of *Virgil*, where the ſame image is preſerved without any hint of allegory: As indeed it is no more than a poetical manner of expreſſing the *great height* and *extenſive proſpect* of the mountain.

V. 75. *To ſee the ſmoke from his lov'd palace riſe.*] There is an agreeable tenderneſs in this Image, and nothing can better paint the ardent deſire a man naturally has to review his native country after a long abſence. This is ſtill ſtronger than that which *Cicero* extols in ſeveral places of his works, that *Ulyſſes* preferred the ſight of *Ithaca* to the Immortality proffered him by *Calypſo*. He here deſires to purchaſe, at the price of his life, the pleaſure, not of returning to his country, but even of ſeeing at a diſtance the very ſmoke of it. *Dacier.*

There are ſome things diſperſed in this ſpeech of *Pallas*, which I ſhall lay together; as that *Minerva* makes it an aggravation to the calamity of *Ulyſſes*, to be detained by a Goddeſs that loves him; that he is incloſed in an Iſland; and ſhe adds, round which the Seas flow; as if that was not common to all Iſlands; but theſe expreſſions are uſed to ſhew the impoſſibility of the eſcape of *Ulyſſes*, without the interpoſition of *Jupiter*.

In the concluſion ſhe obſerves, that *Ulyſſes* never neglected to ſacrifice before *Troy*: this is ſaid to ſhew the great piety of *Ulyſſes*, who not only paid his ſacrifices in *Ithaca*, where he abounded in riches, but amongſt ſtrangers in an enemy's country, where there might be a ſcarcity of offerings. *Euſtathius.*

Muſt he, whoſe altars on the *Phrygian* ſhore
With frequent rites, and pure, avow'd thy pow'r,
Be doom'd the worſt of human ills to prove,
Unbleſs'd, abandon'd to the wrath of *Jove*?

Daughter! what words have paſs'd thy lips unweigh'd?
(Reply'd the Thund'rer to the Martial Maid)
Deem not unjuſtly by my doom oppreſt
Of human race the wiſeſt and the beſt.
Neptune, by pray'r repentant rarely won,
Afflicts the chief, t' avenge his Giant ſon,
Whoſe viſual orb *Ulyſſes* robb'd of light:
Great *Polypheme*, of more than mortal might!
Him young *Thoöſa* bore (the bright increaſe
Of *Phorcys*, dreaded in the ſounds and ſeas:)
Whom *Neptune* ey'd with bloom of beauty bleſt,
And in his cave the yielding nymph compreſt.

V. 84. *Daughter! what words*, &c.] This verſe is frequently repeated both in the *Iliad* and the *Odyſſey*; it has here a particular energy. *Jupiter* reproves *Minerva* for ſuppoſing he could ever be unmindful of an Hero ſo pious as *Ulyſſes*. It is ſpoken with vehemence; an inſtance, ſays *Euſtathius*, that it is not only equitable, but an attribute of Divinity, for rulers to remember thoſe who ſerve them faithfully.

V. 89. *T' avenge his Giant-ſon.*] It is artful in the Poet to tell the Reader the occaſion of the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes* in the opening of the Poem; it is a Juſtice due to his character, to ſhew that his misfortunes are not the conſequence of his crimes, but the effect of *Neptune*'s anger.

It is obſervable, that *Homer* does not ſtop to explain how *Ulyſſes* put out the eye of the *Cyclops*: he haſtens forward into the middle of his Poem, and leaves that for the future narration of *Ulyſſes*.

For

For this, the god conſtrains the *Greek* to roam,
A hopeleſs exile from his native home,
From death alone exempt——but ceaſe to mourn;
Let all combine t' atchieve his wiſh'd return:
Neptune aton'd, his wrath ſhall now refrain,
Or thwart the ſynod of the Gods in vain.
Father and King ador'd! *Minerva* cry'd,
Since all who in th' *Olympian* bow'r reſide
Now make the wand'ring *Greek* their publick care,
Let *Hermes* to th' * *Atlantic* iſle repair;
Bid him, arriv'd in bright *Calypſo*'s court,
The Sanction of th' aſſembled pow'rs report:
That wiſe *Ulyſſes* to his native land
Muſt ſpeed, obedient to their high command.
Mean time *Telemachus*, the blooming heir
Of ſea-girt *Ithaca*, demands my care:

* *Ogygia.*

'Tis

V. 110. *Mean time* Telemachus ——*demands my care*, &c.] *Rapin* has raiſed ſeveral objections againſt this piece of conduct in *Homer*: He tells us that the action of the *Odyſſey* is imperfect, that it begins with the voyages of *Telemachus*, and ends with thoſe of *Ulyſſes*: That the four firſt books are all concerning *Telemachus*: That his voyage bears no proportion to that of *Ulyſſes*; that it contributes nothing to his return, which is brought about by *Jupiter*, and the aſſiſtance of the *Phæacians*; that this gave occaſion to *Bene* in his *academical diſcourſes* to aſſert, that the Fable of the *Odyſſey* is double; that the four firſt books of it are neither Epiſode, nor part of an action, nor have any connexion with the reſt of the work.

I am of opinion, that theſe objections are made with too great ſeverity; the deſtruction of the Suitors is the chief hinge upon which the Poem turns, as it contributes chiefly to the re-eſtabliſh-

'Tis mine, to form his green, unpractis'd years,
In ſage debates, ſurrounded with his Peers,
To ſave the ſtate; and timely to reſtrain
The bold intruſion of the Suitor-train;

ment of *Ulyſſes* in his country and regality; and whatever contributes to this end, contributes to the principal action, and is of a piece with the reſt of the Poem; and that this voyage does ſo is evident, in that it gives a defeat to the Suitors, and controls their inſolence; it preſerves *Ulyſſes*'s throne and bed inviolate, in that it gives *Telemachus* courage to reſiſt their attempts: It ſets his character in a fair point of light, who is the ſecond perſonage of the Poem, and is to have a great ſhare in the future actions of it.

Euſtathius judiciouſly obſerves, that *Homer* here prepares the way for the defeat of the Suitors, the chief deſign of his Poem; and lays the ground-work of probability on which he intends to build his Poem, and reconcile it to the rules of credibility.

If it be aſked for what end this voyage of *Telemachus* is made; the anſwer is, to inquire after *Ulyſſes*: So that whatever Epiſodes are interwoven, *Ulyſſes* is ſtill in view; and whatever *Telemachus* acts, is undertaken ſolely upon his account; and conſequently, whatever is acted, contributes to the principal deſign, the reſtoration of *Ulyſſes*. So that the Fable is intire, and the Action not double.

It is to be remembred alſo, that the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes* are the ſubject of the Poem; his perſonal calamities are not only intended, but his domeſtic misfortunes; and by this conduct *Homer* ſhews us the extent of his misfortunes: His Queen is attempted, his Throne threatened, and his Wealth conſumed in riot; *Ulyſſes* ſuffers in *Telemachus*, and in every circumſtance of life is unhappy.

V. 112. *'Tis mine, to form his green, unpractis'd years,* &c.] In this the Poet draws the out-lines of what he is to fill up in the four ſubſequent books: and nothing can give us a greater idea of his unbounded invention, than his building upon ſo plain a foundation ſuch a noble ſuperſtructure: He entertains us with variety of Epiſodes, hiſtorical relations, and manners of thoſe ancient times: It muſt be confeſſed, that the characters in the *Odyſſey*, and the number of the chief actors, are but few; and yet the Poet never tires, he varies and diverſifies the ſtory ſo happily, that he is continually opening new ſcenes to engage our attention. He reſembles his own *Proteus*, he is capable of all ſhapes, yet in all ſhapes the ſame Deity.

Who

Who crowd his palace, and with lawleſs pow'r
His herds and flocks in feaſtful rites devour.
To diſtant *Sparta*, and the ſpacious waſte
Of ſandy *Pyle*, the royal Youth ſhall haſte.
There, warm with filial love, the cauſe inquire
That from his realm retards his god-like Sire:
Deliv'ring early to the voice of Fame
The promiſe of a great, immortal name.
She ſaid: the ſandals of cœleſtial mold
Fledg'd with Ambroſial plumes, and rich with gold,
Surround her feet; with theſe ſublime ſhe ſails
Th' aerial ſpace, and mounts the winged gales:

V. 118. *To diſtant* Sparta, *and the ſpacious waſte*
Of ſandy Pyle——]

Rapin is very ſevere upon this conduct. When *Telemachus*, ſays he, is to ſearch for his father in the Courts of *Greece*, he cannot make the leaſt progreſs without *Minerva*; it is ſhe who inſpires his thoughts, and aſſiſts in the execution. Could not honour, duty or nature have moved his heart towards an abſent father? The machine, adds he, has not the leaſt appearance of probability, inaſmuch as the Goddeſs conducts him to every place, except only where *Ulyſſes* reſides; of which ſhe ought by no means to be ignorant, upon the account of her Divinity.

But ſurely nothing can be more natural, than for a ſon, in order to gain intelligence of an abſent father, to inquire in thoſe places, and of thoſe perſons, where and from whom he is moſt likely to have information. Such is the conduct of *Telemachus*: And Poetry, which delights in the Wonderful, becauſe this conduct agrees with wiſdom, aſcribes it to *Minerva* the Goddeſs of it. No doubt but *Minerva* knew where *Ulyſſes* reſided: but men muſt act as men; ſuch an immediate interpoſition as *Rapin* requires, had ſtopped at once the fountain of the Poet's invention. If what a Poet invents be natural, it is juſtifiable; and he may give the rein to his imagination, if he reſtrain it from running into extravagance and wildneſs.

O'er earth and ocean wide prepar'd to ſoar,
Her dreaded arm a beamy jav'lin bore,
Pond'rous and vaſt; which, when her fury burns,
Proud Tyrants humbles, and whole hoſts o'erturns.
From high *Olympus* prone her flight ſhe bends,
And in the realm of *Ithaca* deſcends.
Her lineaments divine the grave diſguiſe
Of *Mentes*' form conceal'd from human eyes:
(*Mentes*, the Monarch of the *Taphian* land)
A glitt'ring ſpear wav'd awful in her hand.
There in the portal plac'd, the heav'n-born maid
Enormous riot and miſ-rule ſurvey'd.

On

V. 136. Mentes, *the Monarch of the* Taphian *land.*] We are told by tradition, that *Homer* was ſo ſenſible of friendſhip, that to do honour to his particular friends, he immortalized their names in his Poems. In the *Iliad* he has ſhewn his gratitude to *Tychius*; and in the *Odyſſey*, to *Mentes*, *Phemius* and *Mentor*. This *Mentes* was a famous Merchant of the iſle of *Leucade*, who received *Homer* at *Smyrna*, and made him his companion in all his voyages. It is to this *Mentes* we owe the two Poems of *Homer*; for the Poet in all probability had never wrote them without thoſe lights and informations he received, and the diſcoveries he was enabled to make, by thoſe travels. *Homer* is not contented to give his name to the King of the *Taphians*, but feigns alſo that the Goddeſs of Wiſdom choſe to appear in his ſhape preferably to that of all the Kings who were nearer neighbours to *Ithaca*. *Euſtathius* thinks there might have been a real King of *Taphos* of this name, who was a friend to *Ulyſſes*. This may poſſibly be; but I would chuſe to adhere rather to the old tradition, as it does honour to friendſhip. *Dacier.*

V. 139. *Enormous riot and miſ-rule.*] This is the firſt appearance of the Suitors; and the Poet has drawn their pictures in ſuch colours, as are agreeable to their characters through the whole Poem. They are, as *Horace* expreſſes it,

——*Fruges*

On hides of Beeves, before the palace gate,
(Sad ſpoils of luxury) the Suitors ſate.
With rival art, and ardor in their mien,
At Cheſs they vie, to captivate the Queen,
Divining of their loves. Attending nigh,
A menial train the flowing bowl ſupply:
Others apart, the ſpacious hall prepare,
And form the coſtly feaſt with buſy care.

———*Fruges conſumere nati,*
Sponſi Penelopes, Nebulones———

The Poet gives a fine contraſt between them and *Telemachus*; he entertains himſelf with his own thoughts, weighs the ſum of things, and beholds with a virtuous ſorrow the diſorders of the Suitors: He appears (like *Ulyſſes* among his transformed companions in the tenth book) a wiſe man, among brutes.

V. 143. *At Cheſs they vie, to captivate the Queen,*
Divining of their loves——]

There are great diſputes what this Game was, at which the Suitors played. *Athenæus* relates it from *Apian* the Grammarian, who had it from *Cteſon* a native of *Ithaca*, that the ſport was in this manner. The number of the Suitors being one hundred and eight, they equally divided their men or balls; that is to ſay, fifty-four on each ſide; theſe were placed on the board oppoſite to each other. Between the two ſides was a vacant ſpace, in the midſt of which was the main mark, or *Queen*, the point which all were to aim at. They took their turns by lot; he who took or diſplaced that mark, got his own in its place; and if by a ſecond man, he again took it, without touching any of the others, he won the game; and it paſſed as an omen of obtaining his miſtreſs. This principal mark, or *Queen*, was called by whatever name the Gameſters pleaſed; and the Suitors gave it the name of *Penelope*.

It is ſaid, this Game was invented by *Palamedes* during the ſiege of *Troy*. [*Sophocles in Palam.*] *Euſtath. Spondan. Dacier.*

There young *Telemachus*, his bloomy face
Glowing cœleſtial ſweet, with god-like grace,
Amid the Circle ſhines: but hope and fear
(Painful viciſſitude!) his boſom tear.
Now imag'd in his mind, he ſees reſtor'd
In peace and joy, the people's rightful Lord;
The proud Oppreſſors fly the vengeful ſword.
While his fond ſoul theſe fancied triumphs ſwell'd,
The ſtranger Gueſt the royal Youth beheld,
Griev'd that a Viſitant ſo long ſhould wait
Unmark'd, unhonour'd, at a Monarch's gate;
Inſtant he flew with hoſpitable haſte,
And the new friend with courteous air embrac'd.
Stranger! whoe'er thou art, ſecurely reſt
Affianc'd in my faith, a friendly gueſt:
Approach the dome, the ſocial banquet ſhare,
And then the purpoſe of thy ſoul declare.
Thus affable and mild, the Prince precedes,
And to the dome th' unknown Cœleſtial leads.
The ſpear receiving from her hand, he plac'd
Againſt a column, fair with ſculpture grac'd;

V. 157. *Griev'd that a Viſitant ſo long ſhould wait.*] The Reader will loſe much of the pleaſure of this Poem, if he reads it without the reflection, that he peruſes one of the moſt ancient books in the world; it ſets before him perſons, places and actions that exiſted three thouſand years ago: Here we have an inſtance of the humanity of thoſe early ages: *Telemachus* pays a reverence to this ſtranger, only becauſe he is a ſtranger: He attends him in perſon, and welcomes him with all the openneſs of ancient hoſpitality.

Where

Where ſeemly rang'd in peaceful order ſtood
Ulyſſes' Arms, now long diſus'd to blood.
He led the Goddeſs to the ſov'reign ſeat,
Her feet ſupported with a ſtool of ſtate;
(A purple carpet ſpread the pavement wide)
Then drew his ſeat, familiar, to her ſide;
Far from the Suitor-train, a brutal crowd,
With inſolence, and wine, elate and loud:
Where the free gueſt, unnoted, might relate,
If haply conſcious, of his Father's fate.
The golden ew'r a maid obſequious brings,
Repleniſh'd from the cool, tranſlucent ſprings;
With copious water the bright vaſe ſupplies
A ſilver laver, of capacious ſize:
They waſh. The tables in fair order ſpread,
They heap the glitt'ring Caniſters with bread:
Viands of various kinds allure the taſte,
Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour, rich repaſt!

Delicious

V. 185, &c. *The Feaſt deſcrib'd.*] There is nothing that has drawn more ridicule upon *Homer*, than the frequent deſcriptions of his entertainments: It has been judged, that he was more than ordinarily delighted with them, ſince he omits no opportunity to deſcribe them; nay his temperance has not been unſuſpected, according to that verſe of *Horace*,

Laudibus arguitur vini vinoſus Homerus.

But we muſt not condemn without ſtronger evidence: a man may commend a ſumptuous entertainment, or good wines, without being either a drunkard or a glutton. But ſince there are ſo many entertainments

Delicious wines th' attending herald brought;
The gold gave luſtre to the purple draught.
Lur'd with the vapour of the fragrant feaſt,
In ruſh'd the Suitors with voracious haſte:
Marſhal'd in order due, to each a Sew'r
Preſents, to bath his hands, a radiant ew'r.
Luxurious then they feaſt. Obſervant round
Gay ſtripling youths the brimming goblets crown'd.
The rage of hunger quell'd, they all advance,
And form to meaſur'd airs the mazy dance:

ments deſcribed in the Poem, it may not be improper to give this ſome explanation.

They waſh before the feaſt; perhaps, ſays *Euſtathius*, becauſe they always at the feaſt made libations to the Gods. The Ewer was of gold, the veſſel from whence the water was poured of ſilver, and the cups out of which they drank, were of gold.

A damſel attends *Mentes*, but heralds wait upon the Suitors: *Euſtathius* obſerves a decency in this conduct; the Suitors were lewd debauchees, and conſequently a woman of modeſty would have been an improper attendant upon ſuch a company. Beautiful Youths attended the company in quality of cup-bearers.

A Matron who has charge of the houſhold (ταμίη) brings in the bread and the cold meats, for ſo *Euſtathius* interprets εἴδατα; an officer, whoſe employ it was to portion out the victuals, brings in the meats that furniſhed out the reſt of the entertainment; and after the feaſt, a Bard diverts them with vocal and inſtrumental muſick.

Dacier is in great pain about the cold victuals; ſhe is afraid leſt the Reader ſhould think them the leavings of a former day: and tells us they might poſſibly be in the nature of our cold *Tongues*, *Jambons*, &c. But I think ſuch fears to be groundleſs: We muſt have reference to the cuſtoms of thoſe early ages; and if it was cuſtomary for cold meats to be ſerved up (neither is it neceſſary to ſuppoſe them the leavings of the former entertainment) it can be no diſgrace to the hoſpitality of *Telemachus*.

To

To *Phemius* was conſign'd the chorded Lyre,
Whoſe hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:
Phemius, whoſe voice divine could ſweeteſt ſing
High ſtrains reſponſive to the vocal ſtring.
Mean while, in whiſpers to his heav'nly gueſt
His indignation thus the Prince expreſt.
Indulge my riſing grief, whilſt theſe (my friend)
With ſong and dance the pompous revel end.
Light is the dance, and doubly ſweet the lays,
When, for the dear delight, another pays.
His treaſur'd ſtores theſe Cormorants conſume,
Whoſe bones, defrauded of a regal tomb
And common turf, lie naked on the plain,
Or doom'd to welter in the whelming main.
Should he return, that troop ſo blithe and bold,
With purple robes inwrought, and ſtiff with gold,

V. 197. *To Phemius was conſign'd the chorded Lyre.*] In ancient times, Princes entertained in their families certain learned and wiſe men, who were both Poets and Philoſophers, and not only made it their buſineſs to amuſe and delight, but to promote wiſdom and morality. *Ulyſſes*, at his departure for *Troy*, left one of theſe with *Penelope*: and it was uſual to conſign in this manner, the care of their wives and families to the Poets of thoſe days, as appears from a ſignal paſſage in the third book, verſe (of the original) 267, &c. To this man *Homer* gives the name of *Phemius*; to celebrate one of his friends, who was ſo called, and who had been his Præceptor, (ſays *Euſtathius*.) I muſt add one remark, that though he places his maſter here in no very good company, yet he guards his character from any imputation, by telling us, that he attended the Suitors by compulſion. This is not only a great inſtance of his gratitude, but alſo of his tenderneſs and delicacy.

Precipitant

Precipitant in fear, would wing their flight,
And curſe their cumbrous pride's unwieldy weight.
But ah I dream!——th' appointed hour is fled,
And Hope, too long with vain deluſion fed,
Deaf to the rumour of fallacious fame,
Gives to the roll of death his glorious name!
With venial freedom let me now demand
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land:
Sincere, from whence began thy courſe, recite,
And to what ſhip I owe the friendly freight?
Now firſt to me this viſit doſt thou daign,
Or number'd in my father's ſocial train?
All who deſerv'd his choice, he made his own,
And curious much to know, he far was known.
My birth I boaſt (the blue-ey'd Virgin cries)
From great *Anchialus*, renown'd and wiſe:
Mentes my name; I rule the *Taphian* race,
Whoſe bounds the deep circumfluent waves embrace:

V. 225. *All who deſerv'd his choice*——] It is evident, from this and many other places in the *Iliad*, that Hoſpitality was hereditary; an happineſs and honour peculiar to thoſe heroic ages. And ſurely nothing can ſet the character of *Ulyſſes* in a more agreeable point of light, than what *Telemachus* here delivers of it: "He was "the friend of all mankind." *Euſtathius* obſerves, that φιλοξενος has a middle ſignification; that it implies that *Ulyſſes* behaved benevolently to all men; or that all men behaved benevolently to *Ulyſſes*; either ſenſe makes *Ulyſſes* a very amiable perſon: He muſt be a friend to all men, to whom all men are friends.

A duteous

A duteous people, and induſtrious Iſle,
To naval arts inur'd, and ſtormy toil.
Freighted with Iron from my native land,
I ſteer my voyage to the *Brutian* ſtrand;
To gain by commerce, for the labour'd maſs,
A juſt proportion of refulgent Braſs.
Far from your Capital my ſhip reſides
At *Reithrus*, and ſecure at anchor rides;
Where waving groves on airy *Neion* grow,
Supremely tall, and ſhade the deeps below.
Thence to re-viſit your imperial dome,
An old hereditary Gueſt I come:
Your father's friend. *Laertes* can relate
Our faith unſpotted, and its early date;

V. 234. *I ſteer my voyage to the* Brutian *ſtrand.*] In the country of the *Brutians*, in the lower part of *Italy*, was a town called *Temeſe*. That *Homer* here meant this city, and not one of the ſame name in *Cyprus*, appears not only becauſe this was famous for works of braſs, but becauſe (as *Strabo* obſerves) *Ithaca* lay in the direct way from *Taphos* to this city of the *Brutii*; whereas it was conſiderably out of the way to paſs by *Ithaca* to that of *Cyprus*. The ſame Author ſays, that the rooms for preparing of braſs were remaining in his time, though then out of uſe. *Ovid. Met.* 15.

Hippotadæque domos regis, Temeſeſque metalla.

And *Statius, Sylv.*

——— *ſe totis Temeſo dedit hauſta metallis.*

Bochart is of opinion, that the name of *Temeſe* was given to this town by the *Phœnicians*, from the braſs it produced, *Temes* in their language ſignifying Fuſion of Metals: an art to which the *Phœnicians* much applied themſelves. *Euſtat. Dacier.*

Who

Who preſt with heart-corroding grief and years,
To the gay Court a rural ſhed prefers,
Where ſole of all his train, a Matron ſage
Supports with homely food his drooping age,
With feeble ſteps from marſhalling his Vines
Returning ſad, when toilſom day declines.

With friendly ſpeed, induc'd by erring fame,
To hail *Ulyſſes*' ſafe return I came:
But ſtill the frown of ſome celeſtial pow'r
With envious joy retards the bliſsful hour.
Let not your Soul be ſunk in ſad deſpair;
He lives, he breaths this heav'nly vital air,

V. 245. Laertes's *Retirement.*] This moſt beautiful paſſage of *Laertes* has not eſcaped the cenſure of the Critics: they ſay he acts an unmanly part, he forgets that he is a King, and reduces himſelf unworthily into the condition of a ſervant. *Euſtathius* gives two reaſons for his retirement, which anſwer thoſe objections; the firſt is, that he could not endure to ſee the outrage and inſolence of the Suitors; the ſecond, that his Grief for *Ulyſſes* makes him abandon ſociety, and prefer his vineyard to his Court. This is undoubtedly the picture of human nature under affliction; for ſorrow loves ſolitude. Thus it is, as *Dacier* well obſerves, that *Menedemus* in *Terence* laments his loſt Son: *Menedemus* is the picture of *Laertes*. Nor does it make any difference, that the one is a King, the other a perſon of private ſtation: Kings are but ennobled humanity, and are liable, as other men, to as great, if not greater ſenſibility.

The word ἑρπύζοντα (*creeping* about his vineyard) has alſo given offence, as it carries an idea of meanneſs with it; but *Euſtathius* obſerves, that it excellently expreſſes the melancholy of *Laertes*, and denotes no meanneſs of ſpirit: The ſame word is applied to the great *Achilles* in the *Iliad*, when he laments at the Obſequies of *Patroclus*; and *Horace* no doubt had it in his view,

——*Tacitum ſylvas inter reptare ſalubres.*

Among

Among a ſavage race, whoſe ſhelfy bounds
With ceaſeleſs roar the foaming deep ſurrounds.
The thoughts which roll within my raviſh'd breaſt,
To me, no Seer, th' inſpiring Gods ſuggeſt;
Nor ſkill'd, nor ſtudious, with prophetic eye,
To judge the winged omens of the ſky.
Yet hear this certain ſpeech, nor deem it vain;
Tho' Adamantine bonds the chief reſtrain,
The dire reſtraint his wiſdom will defeat,
And ſoon reſtore him to his regal ſeat.
But, gen'rous youth! ſincere and free declare,
Are you, of manly growth, his royal heir?
For ſure *Ulyſſes* in your look appears,
The ſame his features, if the ſame his years.
Such was that face, on which I dwelt with joy
Ere *Greece* aſſembled ſtem'd the tides to *Troy*;

V. 257. *Among a ſavage race,* &c.] It is the obſervation of *Euſtathius*, that what *Minerva* here delivers bears reſemblance to the Oracles, in which part is falſe, part true: That *Ulyſſes* is detained in an Iſland, is a truth; that he is detained by Barbarians, a falſehood: This is done by the Goddeſs, that ſhe may be thought to be really a man, as ſhe appears to be; ſhe ſpeaks with the dubiouſneſs of a man, not the certainty of a Goddeſs; ſhe raiſes his expectation by ſhewing ſhe has an inſight into futurity; and to engage his belief ſhe diſcovers in part the truth to *Telemachus*. Neither was it neceſſary or convenient for *Telemachus* to know the whole truth: for if he had known that *Ulyſſes* inhabited a deſert, detained by a Goddeſs, he muſt of conſequence have known of his return, (for he that could certify the one, could certify the other) and ſo had never gone in ſearch of him; and it would hence have happened, that *Homer* had been deprived of giving us thoſe graces of Poetry which ariſe from the voyage of *Telemachus*. *Euſtathius.*

But parting then for that deteſted ſhore,
Our eyes unhappy! never greeted more.
To prove a genuine birth (the Prince replies)
On Female truth aſſenting faith relies;
Thus manifeſt of right, I build my claim
Sure-founded on a fair Maternal fame,

V. 275. *To prove a genuine birth*, &c.] There is an appearance of ſomething very ſhocking in this ſpeech of *Telemachus*. It literally runs thus: *My mother aſſures me that I am the Son of* Ulyſſes, *but I know it not*. It ſeems to reflect upon his mother's chaſtity, as if he had a doubt of his own legitimacy. This ſeeming ſimplicity in *Telemachus*, ſays *Euſtathius*, is the effect of a troubled ſpirit; it is grief that makes him doubt if he can be the ſon of the great, the generous *Ulyſſes*; it is no reflection upon *Penelope*, and conſequently no fault in *Telemachus*: It is an undoubted truth that the mother only knows the legitimacy of the child: Thus *Euripides*,

Ἡ μὲν, γὰρ αὐτῆς οἶδεν ὅτῳ ὃδ' οἴεται.

that is, the mother knows the child, the father only believes it.
Thus alſo *Menander*,

Αὐτὸν γὰρ οὐδεὶς οἶδε τῷ πότ' ἐγένετο
Ἀλλ' ὑπονοοῦμεν πάντες ἢ πιστεύομεν.

that is, No man knows aſſuredly who begot him, we only gueſs it, and believe it.
Ariſtotle in his *Rhetoric* is alſo of this opinion;

Ἄριστα περὶ τῶν τέκνων κρίνουσιν αἱ γυναῖκες.

What I have here ſaid, is literally tranſlated from *Euſtathius*, and if it edifies the Reader I am content. But the meaning of the paſſage is this, *Mentes* aſks *Telemachus* if he be the ſon of *Ulyſſes*; he replies, "*So my mother aſſures me; but nothing ſure ſo wretched as I am could* "*proceed from that great man.*"
But however this may be reconciled to truth, I believe few Ladies would take it as a compliment, if their ſons ſhould tell them there was ſome room to doubt of their legitimacy; there may be abundance of truth in it, and yet very little decency.

Ulyſſes'

Ulyſſes' Son: but happier he, whom fate
Hath plac'd beneath the ſtorms which toſs the great!
Happier the ſon, whoſe hoary ſire is bleſt
With humble affluence, and domeſtic reſt!
Happier than I, to future empire born,
But doom'd a Father's wretched fate to mourn!
To whom, with aſpect mild, the Gueſt divine.
Oh true deſcendant of a ſcepter'd line!
The Gods, a glorious fate from anguiſh free
To chaſte *Penelope*'s increaſe decree.
But ſay, yon' jovial Troop ſo gayly dreſt,
Is this a bridal or a friendly feaſt!
Or from their deed I rightlier may divine,
Unſeemly flown with inſolence and wine?
Unwelcome revellers, whoſe lawleſs joy
Pains the ſage ear, and hurts the ſober eye.
Magnificence of old (the Prince reply'd)
Beneath our roof with Virtue could reſide;
Unblam'd abundance crown'd the royal board,
What time this dome rever'd her prudent Lord;
Who now (ſo heav'n decrees) is doom'd to mourn,
Bitter conſtraint! erroneous and forlorn.
Better the Chief, on *Ilion*'s hoſtile plain
Had fall'n ſurrounded with his warlike train;
Or ſafe return'd, the race of glory paſt,
New to his friends embrace, had breath'd his laſt!

Then

Then grateful *Greece* with ſtreaming eyes would raiſe
Hiſtoric Marbles, to record his praiſe;
His praiſe, eternal on the faithful ſtone,
Had with tranſmiſſive honour grac'd his Son.
Now ſnatch'd by Harpies to the dreary coaſt,
Sunk is the Hero, and his glory loſt:
Vaniſh'd at once! unheard-of, and unknown!
And I his Heir in miſery alone.
Nor for a dear, loſt Father only flow
The filial tears, but woe ſucceeds to woe:
To tempt the ſpouſeleſs Queen with am'rous wiles,
Reſort the Nobles from the neighb'ring Iſles;
From *Samos*, circled with th' *Ionian* main,
Dulichium, and *Zacynthus*' ſylvan reign:

V. 309. *Now ſnatch'd by Harpies, &c.*] The meaning of this expreſſion is, that *Ulyſſes* has not had the rites of ſepulture. This among the Ancients was eſteemed the greateſt of calamities, as it hindered the Shades of the deceaſed from entring into the ſtate of the happy.

V. 315. *To tempt the ſpouſeleſs Queen ——reſort the Nobles.*] It is neceſſary to reconcile the conduct of the Suitors to probability, ſince it has ſo great a ſhare in the proceſs of the *Odyſſey*. It may ſeem incredible that *Penelope*, who is a Queen, in whom the ſupreme power is lodged, ſhould not diſmiſs ſuch unwelcome intruders, eſpecially ſince many of them were her own ſubjects: Beſides, it ſeems an extraordinary way of courtſhip in them, to ruin the perſon to whom they make their addreſſes.

To ſolve this objection we muſt conſider the nature of the *Grecian* governments: The chief men of the land had great authority: Though the government was monarchical, it was not deſpotic: *Laertes* was retired, and diſabled with age; *Telemachus* was yet in his minority; and the fear of any violence either againſt her own perſon, or againſt her ſon, might deter *Penelope* from uſing any endeavours to remove men of ſuch inſolence, and ſuch power. *Dacier.*

Ev'n

Ev'n with preſumptuous hope her bed t' aſcend,
The Lords of *Ithaca* their right pretend.
She ſeems attentive to their pleaded vows,
Her heart deteſting what her ear allows.
They, vain expectants of the bridal hour,
My ſtores in riotous expence devour,
In feaſt and dance the mirthful months employ,
And meditate my doom, to crown their joy.

With tender pity touch'd, the Goddeſs cry'd:
Soon may kind heav'n a ſure relief provide,
Soon may your Sire diſcharge the vengeance due,
And all your wrongs the proud oppreſſors rue!
Oh! in that portal ſhould the chief appear,
Each hand tremendous with a brazen ſpear,
In radiant Panoply his limbs incas'd;
(For ſo of old my father's court he grac'd,
When ſocial mirth unbent his ſerious ſoul,
O'er the full banquet, and the ſprightly bowl)
He then from *Ephyré*, the fair domain
Of *Ilus* ſprung from *Jaſon*'s royal ſtrain,
Meaſur'd a length of ſeas, a toilſome length, in vain.
For voyaging to learn the direful art
To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart;

Obſervant

V. 341. *To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart.*] It is neceſſary to explain this paſſage. It ſeems at firſt view, as if *Ulyſſes* had requeſted what a good man could not grant. *Ilus*, ſays *Mentes*, denied

Obſervant of the Gods, and ſternly juſt,
Ilus refus'd t' impart the baneful truſt:
With friendlier zeal my Father's ſoul was fir'd,
The drugs he knew, and gave the boon deſir'd.
Appear'd he now with ſuch heroic port,
As then conſpicuous at the *Taphian* court;
Soon ſhould yon' boaſters ceaſe their haughty ſtrife,
Or each atone his guilty love with life.
But of his wiſh'd return the care reſign;
Be future vengeance to the pow'rs divine.
My ſentence hear: With ſtern diſtaſte avow'd,
To their own diſtricts drive the Suitor-crowd:
When next the morning warms the purple Eaſt,
Convoke the Peerage, and the Gods atteſt;
The ſorrows of your inmoſt ſoul relate;
And form ſure plans to ſave the ſinking ſtate.

denied the Poiſon, becauſe he feared the anger of the Gods; and the poiſon itſelf is called by *Homer* Ἀνδροφόνον, as if it were deſigned againſt mankind. *Euſtathius* defends *Ulyſſes* variouſly: He intended, ſays he, to employ it againſt beaſts only, that infeſted his country, or in hunting. He aſſigns another reaſon, and ſays that the Poet is preparing the way to give an air of probability to the deſtruction of the Suitors. He poiſons his arrows, that every wound may be mortal; on this account the Poiſon may be called ἀνδροφόνον; for it is certain in the wars of *Troy* poiſoned arrows were not in uſe, for many perſons who were wounded recovered; ſo that of neceſſity they muſt be reſerved for domeſtic occaſions. From what has been ſaid we may collect the reaſon why *Anchialus* granted the poiſon to *Ulyſſes*, and *Ilus* denied it; *Anchialus* was the friend of *Ulyſſes*, and knew that he would not employ it to any ill purpoſe: but *Ilus*, who was a ſtranger to him, was afraid leſt he ſhould abuſe it. *Euſtathius.*

Should

Should ſecond love a pleaſing flame inſpire,
And the chaſte Queen connubial rites require;
Diſmiſs'd with honour let her hence repair
To great *Icarius*, whoſe paternal care
Will guide her paſſion, and reward her choice
With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.
Then let this dictate of my love prevail:
Inſtant, to foreign realms prepare to ſail,
To learn your Father's fortunes: Fame may prove
Or omen'd Voice (the meſſenger of *Jove*)

Propitious

V. 360. *Diſmiſs'd with honour let her hence repair.*] I will lay before the reader literally what *Euſtathius* obſerves upon theſe words. There is a Solœciſm, ſays he, in theſe verſes or words, that cannot be reduced to the rules of conſtruction. It ſhould be μήτηρ, not μητέρα ἄψ' ἴτω. How then comes the accuſative caſe to be uſed inſtead of the nominative? *Mentes*, adds he, may be ſuppoſed to have intended to have ſaid ἀποπέμψον, (ſend thy Mother away;) but conſidering in the midſt of the Sentence, that ſuch advice was not ſuitable to be given to *Telemachus*, he checks himſelf and ſuppreſſes ἀποπέμψον; and no other word immediately occuring, that requir'd an accuſative caſe, he falls into a Solœciſm.

But perhaps this is more ingenious than true; though *Mentes* was in haſte when he ſpoke it, *Homer* was not when he compoſed it. Might not an error creep into the originial by the negligence of a Tranſcriber, who might write Μητέρα for Μήτηρ? This is the more probable, becauſe the one ſtands in the verſe in every reſpect as well as the other.

What *Euſtathius* adds is very abſurd: he ſays that *Telemachus* muſt obſerve both the interpretations, either ſend thy mother away, or let thy Mother retire. So that the advice was double, ſend thy Mother away if thou doſt not love her; but if thou art unwilling to grieve her, let her receſs be voluntary.

V. 367. *Omen'd Voice——of* Jove.] There is a difficulty in this Paſſage. In any caſe of enquiry, any Words that were heard by accident were

Propitious to the ſearch. Direct your toil
Thro' the wide Ocean firſt to ſandy *Pyle*,
Of *Neſtor*, hoary Sage, his doom demand;
Thence ſpeed your voyage to the *Spartan* ſtrand,
For young *Atrides* to th' *Achaian* coaſt
Arriv'd the laſt of all the victor hoſt.
If yet *Ulyſſes* views the light, forbear,
'Till the fleet hours reſtore the circling year.
But if his ſoul hath wing'd the deſtin'd flight,
Inhabitant of deep diſaſtrous Night,
Homeward with pious ſpeed repaſs the main,
To the pale ſhade funereal rites ordain,
Plant the fair Column o'er the vacant grave,
A Heroe's honours let the Hero have.
With decent grief the royal dead deplor'd,
For the chaſte Queen ſelect an equal Lord.
Then let revenge your daring mind employ,
By fraud or force the Suitor-train deſtroy,
And ſtarting into manhood, ſcorn the boy.

were called by the *Latins*, *Omens*; by *Homer*, *the Voice of Jupiter*; and he ſtiles them ſo, becauſe it is through his providence that thoſe words come to our knowledge: αὐδὴ ſignifies *fame* or *rumour*; and the Ancients referred all voices or ſounds to *Jupiter*; and ſtiled him Ζεὺς πανομφαῖος. So that the voice of *Jove* implies any words that we hear by chance, from whence we can draw any thing that gives light to our concerns or enquiries. *Dacier*, *Euſtathius*.

Haſt

Haſt thou not heard how young *Oreſtes* fir'd
With great revenge, immortal praiſe acquir'd?
His virgin ſword *Ægyſthus'* veins imbru'd;
The murd'rer fell, and blood atton'd for blood.
O greatly bleſs'd with every blooming grace!
With equal ſteps the paths of glory trace;
Join to that royal youth's your rival name,
And ſhine eternal in the ſphere of fame,——.
But my aſſociates now my ſtay deplore,
Impatient on the hoarſe-reſounding ſhore.
Thou, heedful of advice, ſecure proceed;
My praiſe the precept is, be thine the deed.
The counſel of my Friend (the Youth rejoin'd)
Imprints conviction on my grateful mind.
So fathers ſpeak (perſuaſive ſpeech and mild)
Their ſage experience to the fav'rite child,
But ſince to part, for ſweet refection due
The genial viands let my train renew:

V. 387. *Haſt thou not heard*, &c.] It may ſeem that this example of *Oreſtes* does not come fully up to the purpoſe intended: There is a wide difference in the circumſtances: *Oreſtes* ſlew an adulterer, and a ſingle perſon, with an adultereſs. The deſigns of *Telemachus* are not againſt one, but many enemies; neither are they adulterers, nor have they ſlain the father of *Telemachus*, as is the caſe of *Oreſtes*: nor is *Penelope* an adultereſs. The intent therefore of the Goddeſs is only to ſhew what a glorious act it is to defend our parents: *Oreſtes*, ſays *Mentes*, is every where celebrated for honouring his father, and thou ſhalt obtain equal honour by defending thy mother.

The ſenſe that πατροφόνης here bears is remarkable, it ſignifies not only a perſon who kills his own father, but who kills the father of any other perſon. *Euſtathius.*

And

And the rich pledge of plighted faith receive,
Worthy the heir of *Ithaca* to give.
Defer the promis'd boon, (the Goddeſs cries,
Celeſtial azure brightning in her eyes)
And let me now regain the *Reithrian* port:
From *Temeſé* return'd your royal court
I ſhall reviſit; and that pledge receive,
And gifts, memorial of our friendſhip, leave.
Abrupt, with eagle-ſpeed ſhe cut the ſky;
Inſtant inviſible to mortal eye.
Then firſt he recognis'd th' Ætherial gueſt;
Wonder and joy alternate fire his breaſt:
Heroic thoughts infus'd his heart dilate,
Revolving much his father's doubtful fate:
At length compos'd, he join'd the ſuitor-throng,
Huſh'd in attention to the warbled ſong.

His

V. 413. ——*With eagle-ſpeed ſhe cut the ſky,*
Inſtant inviſible——.]

I paſs over the ſeveral interpretations that have been given to the word ἀνώπαια; ſome ſay it implies ſhe flew up the chimney, &c. In reality it ſignifies a ſpecies of an eagle: but it may alſo ſignify the ſame as ἀφανὴς (inviſible,) either of the latter ſenſes are natural, or both together, *like an eagle ſhe diſappeared. Euſtathius.*

V. 420. *Huſh'd in attention to the warbled ſong.*] There may be two reaſons why this is inſerted; either the Suitors were pleaſed with the ſweetneſs of the ſong, or the ſubject of it; they ſat attentive to hear the death of *Ulyſſes*, in the proceſs of his ſtory. This gives us a reaſon why immediately *Penelope* deſcended to ſtop the ſong; ſhe feared leſt he might touch upon the ſtory of *Ulyſſes*, and ſay that he

His tender theme the charming Lyriſt choſe
Minerva's anger, and the direful woes
Which voyaging from *Troy* the Victors bore,
While ſtorms vindictive intercept the ſhore.
The ſhrilling airs the vaulted roof rebounds,
Reflecting to the Queen the ſilver ſounds.
With grief renew'd the weeping fair deſcends;
Their ſovereign's ſtep a virgin train attends:
A veil of richeſt texture wrought, ſhe wears,
And ſilent to the joyous hall repairs.
There from the portal, with her mild command
Thus gently checks the minſtrel's tuneful hand.

he died in his return. This would have reduced her to the utmoſt neceſſity, and ſhe could not have deferred to marry. *Phemius* would have certainly found credit, for Poets were believed to be inſpired by the Gods; they were looked upon as Prophets, and to have ſomething of divinity in them, as appears from *Demodocus* in the 8th book of the *Odyſſey*. Beſides there was a further neceſſity to put a ſtop to the ſong. If *Phemius* had declared him to be dead, *Penelope* could not have avoided marriage; if alive, the Suitors might have deſiſted, or armed themſelves againſt *Ulyſſes*, and then their deaths, one of the principal incidents of the Poem, could not have followed; neither could *Telemachus* have gone in ſearch of his father, if he had foreknown his death, or ſudden return. It is therefore artful in the Poet to cut the ſong ſhort, he reſerves the ſtory of *Ulyſſes* for future narration, and brings all this about by a very probable method, by the interpoſition of *Penelope*, who requeſts that ſome other ſtory may be choſen, a ſtory that ſhe can hear without ſorrow.

It is very cuſtomary for women to be preſent at the entertainments of men; as appears from the conduct of *Helen*, *Arete*, *Nauſicaa*, and *Penelope*, in divers parts of the *Odyſſey*: She is here introduced with the greateſt decency; ſhe enters not the room, but ſtands with tears at the threſhold; and even at that diſtance appears with her face ſhaded by a veil. *Euſtathius*.

Phemius! let acts of Gods, and Heroes old,
What ancient bards in hall and bow'r have told,
Attemper'd to the Lyre, your voice employ;
Such the pleas'd ear will drink with silent joy.
But oh! forbear that dear, disastrous name,
To sorrow sacred, and secure of fame:
My bleeding bosom sickens at the sound,
And ev'ry piercing note inflicts a wound.
Why, dearest object of my duteous love,
(Reply'd the Prince) will you the Bard reprove?
Oft, *Jove*'s ætherial rays (resistless fire)
The chanter's soul and raptur'd song inspire;
Instinct divine! nor blame severe his choice,
Warbling the *Grecian* woes with harp and voice:
For novel lays attract our ravish'd ears;
But old, the mind with inattention hears;

V. 443. *Oft* Jove's *ætherial rays*, &c.] *Telemachus* here reproves his mother for commanding *Phemius* to desist, or not to make *Ulysses* the subject of his song: by saying, that it was not in the Poet's own power to chuse his subject, which was frequently dictated and inspir'd by the Gods. This is a particular instance of the opinion the ancients held as to the immediate inspiration of their Poets. The words in the original evidently bear this sense. *If the subject displease you, 'tis not the Poet but* Jupiter *is to blame, who inspires men of invention, as he himself pleases.* And Mad. *Dacier* strangely mistakes this passage, in rendring it, *it is not the Poet but* Jupiter *who is the cause of our misfortunes, for it is he who dispenses to wretched mortals good or evil as he pleases.* At the same time she acknowledges the word ἀλφησταί, which she here renders *laborious*, or *wretched*, to signify *persons of wit*, in the beginning of *lib.* 6. *and persons of skill and ability in their art*, in *lib.* 11.

Patient

Patient permit the ſadly-pleaſing ſtrain;
Familiar now with grief, your tears refrain,
And in the publick woe forget your own;
You weep not for a periſh'd Lord, alone.
What *Greeks*, now wand'ring in the *Stygian* gloom,
With your *Ulyſſes* ſhar'd an equal doom!
Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil
And various labours of the loom, beguile;
There rule, from palace-cares remote and free,
That care to man belongs, and moſt to me.
Mature beyond his years the Queen admires
His ſage reply, and with her train retires.
Then ſwelling ſorrows burſt their former bounds,
With echoing grief afreſh the dome reſounds;
'Till *Pallas* piteous of her plaintive cries,
In ſlumber clos'd her ſilver-ſtreaming eyes.

V. 455. *Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil, &c.*] Theſe verſes are taken literally from the 6th book of the *Iliad*, except that μῦθος is inſerted inſtead of πόλεμος; *Euſtathius* explains the paſſage thus: *Women are not forbid intirely to ſpeak, for women are talking animals,* λαλητὸν ζῶον, *they have the faculty of talking, and* indeed *are rational creatures*; but they muſt *not give too much liberty to that unruly member, in the company of men.* *Sophocles* adviſes well,

Γύναι, γυναικὶ κόσμον ἡ σιγὴ φέρει.

O woman, ſilence is the ornament of thy ſex. Madam *Dacier*, though ſhe plunders almoſt every thing, has ſpared this obſervation.

Mean-time rekindl'd at the royal charms,
Tumultuous love each beating boſom warms;
Intemp'rate rage a wordy war began;
But bold *Telemachus* aſſum'd the man.
Inſtant (he cry'd) your female diſcord end,
Ye deedleſs boaſters! and the ſong attend;
Obey that ſweet compulſion, nor profane
With diſſonance the ſmooth melodious ſtrain.
Pacific now prolong the jovial feaſt;
But when the dawn reveals the roſy Eaſt,
I, to the Peers aſſembled, ſhall propoſe
The firm reſolve I here in few diſcloſe,
No longer live the cankers of my court;
All to your ſeveral ſtates with ſpeed reſort;
Waſte in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feaſt, and late carouſe.
But if, to honour loſt, 'tis ſtill decreed
For you my bowl ſhall flow, my flock ſhall bleed,
Judge and revenge my right, impartial *Jove!*
By him and all th' immortal thrones above,
(A ſacred oath) each proud oppreſſor ſlain
Shall with inglorious gore this marble ſtain.
Aw'd by the Prince, thus haughty, bold, and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, and wonder chain'd the tongue.
Silence at length the gay *Antinous* broke,
Conſtrain'd a ſmile, and thus ambiguous ſpoke.

What God to your untutor'd youth affords
This headlong torrent of amazing words?
May *Jove* delay thy reign, and cumber late
So bright a genius with the toils of ſtate!
Thoſe toils (*Telemachus* ſerene replies)
Have charms, with all their weight, t' allure the wiſe.

V. 491. *The ſpeech of* Antinous.] *Antinous* and *Eurymachus* are *Ithacenſians*, and are called the chief of the Suitors. It is therefore neceſſary to diſtinguiſh their characters: *Antinous* is violent, and determined againſt *Ulyſſes*; *Eurymachus* more gentle and ſubtle: *Antinous* derides, *Eurymachus* flatters.

This ſpeech of *Antinous* is a concealed raillery; he tells *Telemachus*, that *Jove* inſpires his ſoul with wiſdom, but means that his education has been ſuch, that he had learned nothing from man; he wiſhes (out of a ſeemingly kind concern for him) that he may never reign in *Ithaca*, becauſe the weight of a crown is a burden; and concludes with mentioning his hereditary title to it, to inſinuate that it is his by deſcent only, and not by merit.

Telemachus, in his anſwer, wiſely diſſembles the affront of *Antinous*, he takes it in the better ſenſe, and ſeems to differ only in opinion about the Regality. Think you, ſays he, that to be a King is to be miſerable? To be a King, in my judgment, is to enjoy affluence and honour. He aſſerts his claim to the ſucceſſion of his father, yet ſeems to decline it, to lay the ſuſpicions of the Suitors aſleep, that they may not prevent the meaſures he takes to obtain it. *Euſtathius.*

The ſpeech of *Eurymachus* confirms the former obſervation, that this Suitor is of a more ſoft and moderate behaviour than *Antinous*: He cloaths ill deſigns with a ſeeming humanity, and appears a friend, while he carries on the part of an enemy: *Telemachus* had ſaid, that if it was the will of *Jupiter*, he would aſcend the Throne of *Ithaca*: *Eurymachus* anſwers, that this was as the Gods ſhould determine; an inſinuation that they regarded not his claim from his father. *Telemachus* ſaid he wou'd maintain himſelf in the poſſeſſion of his preſent inheritance: *Eurymachus* wiſhes that no one may arrive to diſpoſſeſs him; the latent meaning of which is, "we of your own country are ſufficient for that Deſign." If theſe obſervations of *Euſtathius* be true, *Eurymachus* was not a leſs enemy than *Antinous*, but a better diſſembler.

Faſt by the Throne obſequious *Fame* reſides,
And *Wealth* inceſſant rolls her golden tides.
Nor let *Antinous* rage, if ſtrong deſire
Of wealth and fame a youthful boſom fire:
Elect by *Jove* his Delegate of ſway,
With joyous pride the ſummons I'd obey.
Whene'er *Ulyſſes* roams the realm of Night,
Shou'd factious pow'r diſpute my lineal right,
Some other *Greeks* a fairer claim may plead;
To your pretence their title wou'd precede.
At leaſt, the ſcepter loſt, I ſtill ſhou'd reign
Sole o'er my vaſſals, and domeſtic train.
To this *Eurymachus*. To heav'n alone
Refer the choice to fill the vacant Throne.
Your patrimonial ſtores in peace poſſeſs;
Undoubted all your filial claim confeſs:
Your private right ſhou'd impious pow'r invade,
The peers of *Ithaca* wou'd arm in aid.
But ſay, that Stranger-gueſt who late withdrew,
What and from whence? his name and lineage ſhew.
His grave demeanour, and majeſtic grace
Speak him deſcended of no vulgar race:
Did he ſome loan of antient right require,
Or came fore-runner of your ſcepter'd Sire?
Oh ſon of *Polybus!* the Prince replies,
No more my Sire will glad theſe longing eyes:

The

The Queen's fond hope inventive rumour cheers,
Or vain diviners' dreams divert her fears.
That ſtranger-gueſt the *Taphian* realm obeys,
A realm defended with incircling ſeas.
Mentes, an ever-honour'd name, of old
High in *Ulyſſes*' ſocial liſt inroll'd.

Thus he, tho' conſcious of th' ætherial Gueſt,
Anſwer'd evaſive of the ſly requeſt.
Mean time the Lyre rejoins the ſprightly lay;
Love-dittied airs, and dance, conclude the day.
But when the Star of Eve, with golden light
Adorn'd the matron-brow of ſable Night;
The mirthful train diſperſing quit the court,
And to their ſeveral domes to Reſt reſort.
A tow'ring ſtructure to the palace join'd;
To this his ſteps the thoughtful Prince inclin'd;
In his pavilion there to ſleep repairs;
The lighted torch the ſage *Euryclea* bears.

(Daughter

V. 540. *The ſage* Euryclea.] *Euryclea* was a very aged perſon; ſhe was bought by *Laertes* to nurſe *Ulyſſes*; and in her old age attends *Telemachus*: She coſt *Laertes* twenty Oxen; that is, a certain quantity of money (ὅλης μιταλλικῆς) which would buy twenty oxen: or perhaps the form of an ox was ſtamped upon the metal, and from thence had its appellation.

The ſimplicity of theſe Heroic times is remarkable; an old woman is the only attendant upon the ſon of a King: She lights him to his apartment, takes care of his cloaths, and hangs them up at the ſide of his bed. Greatneſs then conſiſted not in ſhew, but in the mind: this conduct proceeded not from the meanneſs of poverty, but from the ſimplicity of manners. *Euſtathius.*

(Daughter of *Ops*, the juſt *Piſenor*'s ſon,
For twenty beeves by great *Laertes* won;
In roſy prime with Charms attractive grac'd,
Honour'd by him, a gentle Lord and chaſte,
With dear eſteem: too wiſe, with jealous ſtrife
To taint the joys of ſweet, connubial life.
Sole with *Telemachus* her ſervice ends,
A child ſhe nurs'd him, and a man attends.)
Whilſt to his couch himſelf the Prince addreſt,
The duteous dame receiv'd the purple veſt:
The purple veſt with decent care diſpos'd,
The ſilver ring ſhe pull'd, the door reclos'd;
The bolt, obedient to the ſilken cord,
To the ſtrong ſtaple's inmoſt depth reſtor'd,
Secur'd the valves. There, wrapt in ſilent ſhade,
Penſive, the rules the Goddeſs gave, he weigh'd;
Stretch'd on the downy fleece, no reſt he knows,
And in his raptur'd ſoul the Viſion glows.

Having now gone through the firſt book, I ſhall only obſerve to the Reader, that the whole of it does not take up the compaſs of an intire day: when *Minerva* appears to *Telemachus*, the Suitors were preparing to ſit down to the banquet at noon; and the buſineſs of the firſt book concludes with the day. It is true, that the Gods hold a debate before the deſcent of *Minerva*, and ſome ſmall time muſt be allowed for that tranſaction. It is remarkable, that there is not one Simile in this book, except we allow thoſe three words to be one, ὄρνις δ' ὡς ἀνόωτος; the ſame obſervation is true of the firſt book of the *Iliad*. See the Notes on that place.

THE

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

The ARGUMENT.

The Council of *Ithaca*.

Telemachus, *in the aſſembly of the Lords of* Ithaca, *complains of the Injuſtice done him by the Suitors, and inſiſts upon their departure from his Palace; appealing to the Princes, and exciting the people to declare againſt them. The Suitors endeavour to juſtify their ſtay, at leaſt till he ſhall ſend the Queen to the Court of* Icarius *her father; which he refuſes. There appears a prodigy of two Eagles in the ſky, which an Augur expounds to the ruin of the Suitors.* Telemachus *then demands a Veſſel to carry him to* Pylos *and* Sparta, *there to enquire of his father's fortunes.* Pallas *in the ſhape of* Mentor *(an ancient friend of* Ulyſſes) *helps him to a ſhip, aſſiſts him in preparing neceſſaries for the voyage, and imbarks with him that night; which concludes the* ſecond *day from the Opening of the Poem.*

The SCENE continues in the Palace of *Ulyſſes* in *Ithaca.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

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MUSEUM

Jupiter *sends his* Eagles:
A Priest explains this Prodigy.

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

NOW red'ning from the dawn, the Morning ray
Glow'd in the front of Heav'n, and gave the Day.
The youthful Hero, with returning light,
Rose anxious from th' inquietudes of Night.
A royal

This book opens with the first appearance of *Telemachus* upon the stage of action. And *Bossu* observes the great judgment of the Poet, in beginning with the transactions of *Ithaca* in the absence of *Ulysses*: by this method he sets the conduct of *Telemachus*, *Penelope*, and the Suitors, in a strong point of light; they all have a large share in the story of the Poem, and consequently ought to have distinguishing characters. It is as necessary in Epic Poetry, as it is on the Theatre, to let

A royal robe he wore with graceful pride,
A two-edg'd faulchion threaten'd by his ſide,
Embroider'd ſandals glitter'd as he trod,
And forth he mov'd, majeſtic as a God.
Then by his Heralds, reſtleſs of delay,
To council calls the Peers: the Peers obey.
Soon as in ſolemn form th' aſſembly ſate,
From his high dome himſelf deſcends in ſtate.
Bright in his hand a pond'rous javelin ſhin'd;
Two Dogs, a faithful guard, attend behind;

Pallas

let us immediately into the character of every perſon whom the Poet introduces: This adds perſpicuity to the ſtory, and we immediately grow acquainted with each perſonage, and intereſt ourſelves in the good or ill fortune that attends them through the whole relation.

Telemachus is now about twenty years of age: In the eleventh book, the Poet tells us, he was an infant in the arms of his mother when *Ulyſſes* ſailed to *Troy*; that Hero was abſent near twenty years, and from hence we may gather the exact age of *Telemachus*. He is every where deſcribed as a perſon of piety to the Gods, of duty to his parents, and as a lover of his country: he is prudent, temperate, and valiant: and the poet well ſets off the importance of this young Hero, by giving him the Goddeſs of War and Wiſdom for his conſtant attendant.

V. 13. ——— *In his hand a pond'rous javelin ſhin'd.*] The Poet deſcribes *Telemachus* as if he were marching againſt an enemy, or going to a council of war, rather than to an aſſembly of Peers in his own country: Two reaſons are aſſigned for this conduct; either this was the common uſage of Princes in thoſe times, or *Telemachus* might look upon the Suitors as enemies, and conſequently go to council in arms as againſt enemies. *Euſtathius.*

V. 14. *Two Dogs, a faithful Guard, attend behind.*] This paſſage has not eſcaped the raillery of the Critics; they look upon it as a mean deſcription of a Hero and a Prince, to give him a brace of dogs only for his guards or attendants: But ſuch was the ſimplicity of ancient Princes, that except in war they had rarely any attendants or equipage. And we may be confident *Homer* copies after the cuſtom of

Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
And gazing crouds admire him as he moves.
His Father's throne he fill'd: while diſtant ſtood
The hoary Peers, and Aged Wiſdom bow'd.
'Twas ſilence all, at laſt *Ægyptius* ſpoke;
Ægyptius, by his age and ſorrows broke:
A length of days his ſoul with prudence crown'd,
A length of days had bent him to the Ground.
His eldeſt * hope in arms to *Ilion* came, *Antiphus.*
By great *Ulyſſes* taught the path to fame;
But (hapleſs youth) the hideous *Cyclops* tore
His quiv'ring limbs, and quaff'd his ſpouting gore.
Three ſons remain'd: To climb with haughty fires
The royal bed, *Eurynamus* aſpires;

of the time, unleſs we can be ſo abſurd as to ſuppoſe, he would feign low circumſtances unneceſſary through a want of judgment.

Virgil judged otherwiſe, and thought this circumſtance worthy of his imitation.

Quin etiam gemini cuſtodes limine ab alto
Procedunt, greſſumque canes comitantur Herilem.

Achilles is deſcribed in the *Iliad* with the ſame attendants.

——*nine large dogs domeſtick at his board.* B. 23.

Poetry, obſerves *Dacier*, is like Painting, which draws the greateſt beauties from the ſimpleſt cuſtoms: and even in hiſtory, we receive a ſenſible pleaſure from the leaſt circumſtance that denotes the cuſtoms of ancient times. It may be added, that the Poet, as well as the Painter, is obliged to follow the cuſtoms of the age of which he writes, or paints: a modern dreſs would ill become *Achilles* or *Ulyſſes*, ſuch a conduct would be condemned as an abſurdity in painting, and ought to be ſo in poetry.

The

The reſt with duteous love his griefs aſſwage,
And eaſe the Sire of half the cares of age.
Yet ſtill his *Antiphus* he loves, he mourns,
And as he ſtood, he ſpoke and wept by turns.
Since great *Ulyſſes* fought the *Phrygian* plains,
Within theſe walls inglorious ſilence reigns.
Say then, ye Peers! by whoſe commands we meet?
Why here once more in ſolemn council ſit?

V. 31. *Yet ſtill his* Antiphus *he loves, he mourns.*] *Homer*, ſays *Euſtathius*, inſerts theſe particularities concerning the family of *Ægyptius*, to give an air of truth to his ſtory. It does not appear that *Ægyptius* knew the certainty of the death of *Antiphus*: (for it is the Poet who relates it, and not the father;) whence, as *Dacier* obſerves, ſhould he learn it? he only laments him, according to the prevailing opinion that all the companions of *Ulyſſes* were loſt with *Ulyſſes*.

V. 33. *Since great* Ulyſſes, *&c.*] We here are told, that there never had been any council convened in *Ithaca*, ſince the departure of *Ulyſſes*. The general deſign and moral of the *Odyſſey*, is to inform us of the miſchievous effects which the Abſence of a King and Father of a Family produces: We deprive, as *Boſſu* obſerves, the Poem of its very ſoul, and ſpoil the Fable, if we retrench from it the diſorders which the Suitors create in the Abſence of *Ulyſſes*, both in his family and dominions. Nothing can give us a greater image of thoſe diſorders, than what is here related: What muſt a kingdom ſuffer in twenty years without a Ruler, without a Council to make Laws or puniſh enormities? Such is the condition of *Ithaca*: *Laertes* is ſuperannuated; *Penelope* oppreſſed by the violence of the Suitors; and *Telemachus* to this time, in his minority.

It is very artful in the Poet to open the aſſembly by *Ægyptius*: *Telemachus* was the perſon who convened it; and being the greateſt perſonage preſent, it might be expected that he ſhould open the deſign of it: But to give *Telemachus* courage, who was young and inexperienced, *Ægyptius* firſt riſes; and by praiſing the perſon who had ſummoned them (of whom he ſeems ignorant) gives *Telemachus* to underſtand he has friends among the aſſembly: This he could no other way ſo ſafely have done, conſidering the power of the Suitors. By this means *Telemachus* is encouraged to ſpeak boldly, and arraign the diſorders of the Suitors with the utmoſt freedom.

Ye young, ye old, the weighty cauſe diſcloſe:
Arrives ſome meſſage of invading foes?
Or ſay, does high neceſſity of ſtate
Inſpire ſome Patriot, and demand debate!
The preſent Synod ſpeaks its author wiſe;
Aſſiſt him, *Jove* thou regent of the ſkies!
He ſpoke. *Telemachus* with tranſport glows,
Embrac'd the omen, and majeſtic roſe:
(His royal hand th' imperial ſcepter ſway'd)
Then thus, addreſſing to *Ægyptius*, ſaid.
Rev'rend old man! lo here confeſt he ſtands
By whom ye meet; my grief your care demands.
No ſtory I unfold of publick woes,
Nor bear advices of impending foes:
Peace the bleſt land, and joys inceſſant crown;
Of all this happy realm, I grieve alone.
For my loſt Sire continual ſorrows ſpring,
The great, the good; your Father, and your King.

V. 54. *Your Father, and your King.*] *Telemachus* here ſets the character of *Ulyſſes*, as a King, in the moſt agreeable point of light. He ruled his people with the ſame mildneſs as a father rules his children. This muſt needs have a very happy effect upon the audience; not only as it ſhews *Ulyſſes* to have been a good Governour, but as it recalls the memory of the happineſs they received from that mild government, and obliquely condemns them of ingratitude who had forgot it. By this method alſo the Poet intereſts us deeply in the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes*; we cannot ſee a good man and good King in diſtreſs, without the moſt tender emotions.

Yet

Yet more; our houſe from its foundation bows,
Our foes are pow'rful, and your ſons the foes:
Hither, unwelcome to the Queen they come;
Why ſeek they not the rich *Icarian* dome?
If ſhe muſt wed, from other hands require
The dowry: Is *Telemachus* her Sire?
Yet thro' my court the noiſe of Revel rings,
And waſtes the wiſe frugality of Kings.
Scarce all my herds their luxury ſuffice;
Scarce all my wine their midnight hours ſupplies.

Safe

V. 55. *Yet more ——— our houſe*, &c.] What *Telemachus* here ſays has given offence to the Critics; they think it indecent for a ſon to ſay, that he bears with more regret the diſorder of his family than the loſs of his father; yet this objection will vaniſh, if we weigh *Penelope*, *Telemachus*, and his whole poſterity, againſt the ſingle perſon of *Ulyſſes*.

But what chiefly takes away this objection is, that *Telemachus* was ſtill in hopes of his father's return: for ἀπώλεσα does not imply neceſſarily his death, but abſence; and then both with juſtice and decency, *Telemachus* may ſay that he grieves more for the deſtruction of his family, than for the abſence of *Ulyſſes*.

V. 63. *Scarce all my herds their luxury ſuffice.*] This paſſage is ridiculed by the Critics; they ſet it in a wrong light, and then grow very pleaſant upon it: *Telemachus* makes a ſad outcry becauſe the Suitors eat his ſheep, his beeves and fatted goats; and at laſt falls into tears. The truth is, the riches of Kings and Princes, in thoſe early ages, conſiſted chiefly in flocks and cattle; thus *Æneas* and *Paris* are deſcribed as tending their flocks, &c. and *Abraham* in the ſcriptures, as abounding in this kind of wealth.

Theſe Critics would form a different idea of the ſtate and condition of *Telemachus*, if they conſidered that he had been capable to maintain no fewer than an hundred and eight perſons in a manner very expenſive for many years; for ſo many (with their attendants) were the Suitors, as appears from the 16th book: and at the ſame time he kept up the dignity of his own court, and lived with great hoſpitality.

But

Safe in my youth, in riot ſtill they grow,
Nor in the helpleſs Orphan dread a foe.
But come it will, the time when manhood grants
More pow'rful advocates than vain complaints.
Approach that hour! unſufferable wrong
Cries to the Gods, and vengeance ſleeps too long.
Riſe then, ye Peers! with virtuous anger riſe!
Your fame revere, but moſt th' avenging ſkies.
By all the deathleſs pow'rs that reign above,
By righteous *Themis* and by thund'ring *Jove*,
(*Themis*, who gives to councils, or denies
Succeſs; and humbles, or confirms the wiſe)

But it is a ſufficient anſwer to the objections againſt this paſſage, to obſerve, that it is not the expence, but manner of it, that *Telemachus* laments: This he expreſly declares by the word μαψιδίως; and ſurely a ſober man may complain againſt luxury, without being arraigned of meanneſs; and againſt profuſion, without being condemned for parſimony.

V. 75. Themis, *who gives to Councils, or denies Succeſs.*]

Euſtathius obſerves, that there was a cuſtom to carry the ſtatue of *Themis* to the aſſemblies in former ages, and carry it back again when thoſe aſſemblies were diſſolved; and thus *Themis* may be ſaid to form, and diſſolve an aſſembly. *Dacier* diſlikes this aſſertion, as having no foundation in antiquity; ſhe thinks that the aſſertion of *Telemachus* is general, that he intimates it is Juſtice alone that eſtabliſhes the councils of mankind, and that Injuſtice confounds and brings the wicked deſigns of men to confuſion.

I have followed this interpretation, not only as it ſuits beſt with the uſual morality of *Homer*, but alſo as *Jupiter* is mentioned with *Themis*; and no ſuch cuſtom is pretended concerning his ſtatue. He is expreſly ſtiled by the ancients Ζεὺς ἀγοραῖος. In *Sicily* there was an Altar of Ζεὺς ἀγοραῖος, or of *Jupiter who preſides over Councils*. *Euſtathius* from *Herodotus*.

Riſe

Riſe in my aid! ſuffice the tears that flow
For my loſt Sire, nor add new woe to woe.
If e'er he bore the ſword to ſtrengthen ill,
Or having pow'r to wrong, betray'd the will,
On me, on me your kindled wrath aſſwage,
And bid the voice of lawleſs riot rage.
If ruin to our royal race ye doom,
Be You the ſpoilers, and our wealth conſume.
Then might we hope redreſs from juſter laws,
And raiſe all *Ithaca* to aid our cauſe:
But while your Sons commit th' unpunish'd wrong,
You make the arm of Violence too ſtrong.
While thus he ſpoke, with rage and grief he frown'd,
And daſh'd th' imperial ſceptre to the ground.

V. 84. *Be You the ſpoilers, and our wealth conſume.*] To underſtand this paſſage, we muſt remember, as *Euſtathius* remarks, that *Telemachus* is pleading his cauſe before the *Ithacenſians*; them he conſtitutes the Judges of his cauſe: He therefore prevents an anſwer which they might make, *viz. We are not the men that are guilty of theſe Outrages*; *Telemachus* rejoins, "It were better for me to ſuffer from your hands; "for by your quieſcence you make my affairs deſperate:" an intimation that they ſhould riſe in his defence.

V. 91. *The big round tear hung trembling in his Eye.*] This paſſage is not one of thoſe, where the Poet can be blamed for cauſing a Hero to weep. If we conſider the youth of *Telemachus*, together with the tenderneſs agreeable to that time of life; the ſubjects that demand his concern; the apprehenſion of the loſs of a father; and the deſolate ſtate of his mother and kingdom: All theſe make his readineſs to burſt into tears an argument, not of any want of ſpirit in him; but of true ſenſe, and goodneſs of nature; and is a great propriety, which ſhews the right judgment of the Poet.

The

The big round tear hung trembling in his eye:
The Synod griev'd, and gave a pitying ſigh,
Then ſilent ſate——at length *Antinous* burns
With haughty rage, and ſternly thus returns.
O inſolence of youth! whoſe tongue affords
Such railing eloquence, and war of words.
Studious thy country's worthies to defame,
Thy erring voice diſplays thy Mother's ſhame.
Eluſive of the bridal day, ſhe gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.

Did

V. 95. *Oh inſolence of youth,* &c.] We find *Antinous* always ſetting himſelf in the ſtrongeſt oppoſition to *Telemachus*; and therefore he is the firſt that falls by the ſpear of *Ulyſſes*; the Poet obſerves juſtice, and as *Antinous* is the firſt in guilt, he is the firſt in puniſhment. What *Antinous* ſays in this ſpeech concerning the treachery of the female ſervant of *Penelope*, prepares the way for the puniſhment *Ulyſſes* inflicts on ſome of the maids in the concluſion of the Poem: This is an act of poetical juſtice; and it is as neceſſary in Epic as in Tragic Poetry, to reward the juſt, and puniſh the guilty. *Euſtathius.*

V. 99. *Eluſive of the bridal day, ſhe gives*
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.]

It will be neceſſary to vindicate the character of *Penelope*, the Heroine of the Poem, from the aſperſion of *Antinous*. It muſt be confeſt that ſhe has a very hard game to play, ſhe neither dares conſent, nor deny; if ſhe conſents, ſhe injures *Ulyſſes*, whom ſhe ſtill expects to return; if ſhe denies, ſhe endangers the throne, and the life of *Telemachus*, from the violence of the Suitors; ſo that no other method is left but to elude their addreſſes.

I muſt not conceal what *Euſtathius* has mentioned from ſome Authors, as *Lycophron*, &c. who ſay that *Penelope* was κασσωρίδα, in plain *Engliſh*, *an Harlot*; and he quotes *Herodotus*, as affirming that ſhe had a ſon, named *Pan*, by *Hermes*; but the Biſhop declares it is all a ſcandal; and every body muſt conclude the ſame, from her conduct, as deſcribed in *Homer*.

To

Did not the ſun, thro' heav'ns wide azure roll'd,
For three long Years the royal fraud behold?
While ſhe, laborious in deluſion ſpread
The ſpacious loom, and mix'd the various thread:
Where as to life the wond'rous figures riſe,
Thus ſpoke th' inventive Queen, with artful ſighs.
" Tho' cold in death *Ulyſſes* breathes no more,
" Ceaſe yet a while to urge the bridal hour;
" Ceaſe, 'till to great *Laërtes* I bequeath
" A taſk of grief, his ornaments of death.
" Leſt

To vindicate her in this place, we muſt conſider who it is that ſpeaks: *Antinous*, an unſucceſsful Lover: and what he blames as a crime, is really her glory; he blames her becauſe ſhe does not comply with their deſires; and it had been an act of guilt to have comply'd. He himſelf ſufficiently vindicates her in the concluſion of his ſpeech, where he extols her above all the race of womankind: ſo that the ſeeming inconſiſtence of *Penelope* muſt be imputed to the neceſſity of her affairs: ſhe is artful, but not criminal.

The original ſays, ſhe deceived the Suitors by her meſſages; a plain intimation, that ſhe uſed no extraordinary familiarities with her Admirers; and through the whole Courſe of the Poem ſhe ſeldom appears in their Aſſemblies.

V. 109. *Ceaſe, 'till to great* Laërtes *I bequeath*
A taſk of grief, his ornaments of death.]

It was an ancient cuſtom to dedicate the fineſt pieces of Weaving and Embroidery, to honour the funerals of the dead: and theſe were uſually wrought by the neareſt relations in their life-time. Thus in the 22d *Iliad*, *Andromache* laments, that the body of *Hector* muſt be expoſed to the air, without thoſe ornaments.

——ἀτὰρ τοι εἵματ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι κέονται,
Λεπτά τε καὶ χαρίεντα, τετυγμένα χερσὶ γυναικῶν.

And

" Leſt when the Fates his royal aſhes claim,
" The *Grecian* matrons taint my ſpotleſs fame;
" When he, whom living mighty realms obey'd,
" Shall want in death a ſhroud to grace his ſhade."
Thus ſhe: at once the gen'rous train complies,
Nor fraud miſtruſts in virtue's fair diſguiſe.
The work ſhe ply'd; but ſtudious of delay,
By night revers'd the labours of the day.
While thrice the ſun his annual journey made,
The conſcious lamp the midnight fraud ſurvey'd;
Unheard, unſeen, three Years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid unfolds th' amazing tale.
We ſaw, as unperceiv'd we took our ſtand,
The backward labours of her faithleſs hand.
Then urg'd, ſhe perfects her illuſtrious toils;
A wond'rous monument of female wiles!
But you, oh Peers! and thou, oh Prince! give ear
(I ſpeak aloud, that every *Greek* may hear)
Diſmiſs the Queen; and if her fire approves,
Let him eſpouſe her to the Peer ſhe loves:
Bid inſtant to prepare the bridal train,
Nor let a race of Princes wait in vain.

And the mother of *Euryalus* in *Virgil*, to her ſon.

——Nec te tua funera mater
Produxi, preſſive oculos, aut vulnera lavi,
Veſte tegens, tibi quam noctes feſtina dieſque
Urgebam, & telæ curas ſolabar anilis.

Tho'

Tho' with a grace divine her ſoul is bleſt,
And all *Minerva* breathes within her breaſt,
In wond'rous arts than woman more renown'd,
And more than woman with deep wiſdom crown'd;
Tho' *Tyro* nor *Mycene* match her Name,
Nor great *Alcmena* (the proud boaſts of Fame)
Yet thus by heav'n adorn'd, by heav'n's decree
She ſhines with fatal excellence, to thee:
With thee, the bowl we drain, indulge the feaſt,
'Till righteous heav'n reclaim her ſtubborn breaſt.
What tho' from pole to pole reſounds her name!
The ſon's deſtruction waits the mother's fame:
For till ſhe leaves thy court, it is decreed,
Thy bowl to empty, and thy flock to bleed.
While yet he ſpeaks, *Telemachus* replies,
Ev'n Nature ſtarts, and what ye aſk denies.
Thus,

V. 140. *She ſhines with fatal excellence, to thee.*] *Euſtathius* obſerves, that *Antinous*, in the opening of his Speech, throws the fault upon *Penelope*, to engage the favour of the multitude: But being conſcious that he had ſaid things which *Penelope* would reſent, he extols her in the concluſion of it. He aſcribes an obſtinacy of virtue to her, and by this double conduct endeavours to make both *Penelope* and the multitude his friends.

V. 147. Telemachus's *reply.*] *Telemachus* every where ſpeaks with an openneſs and bravery of ſpirit; this ſpeech is a teſtimony of it, as well as his former; he anſwers chiefly to the diſmiſſion of *Penelope*, ſays it would be an offence againſt Heaven and Earth; and concludes with a vehemence of expreſſion, and tells *Antinous* that ſuch a word, μῦθον, ſhall never fall from his tongue.

The Critics have found fault with one part of the Speech, as betraying a ſpirit of avarice and meanneſs in *Telemachus*.

How

Thus, ſhall I thus repay a mother's cares,
Who gave me life, and nurs'd my infant years?

How to Icarius, *in the bridal hour,*
Shall I, by waſte undone, refund the dow'r?

They think it unworthy of *Telemachus* to make the Dower of *Penelope* an argument againſt her diſmiſſion, and conſequently aſcribe his detention of her, not to duty, but to covetouſneſs. To take away this objection, they point the verſes in a different manner, and place a ſtop after ἀποτίσειν, and then the ſenſe runs thus: "I cannot conſent to diſmiſs her who bore me, and nurſed me in "my infancy, while her huſband is abſent, or perhaps dead; beſides, "hard would be the Puniſhment I ſhould ſuffer, if I ſhould volun- "tarily ſend away *Penelope* to *Icarius*."

Dacier diſlikes this ſolution, and appeals to the cuſtoms of thoſe Ages, to juſtify her opinion: If a ſon forced away his mother from his houſe, he was obliged to reſtore her dower, and all ſhe brought in marriage to her huſband: but if ſhe retired voluntarily to engage in a ſecond marriage, the dower remained with the ſon as lawful heir. This opinion of *Dacier* may be confirmed from *Demoſthenes* in his orations, ἢν μὲν ταῦτα ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς τελευτήσαντος, ἀπολιποῦσα τὸν οἶκον, καὶ κομισαμένη τὴν προῖκα. *Afterwards upon the deceaſe of her huſband, leaving his family, and receiving back her portion*, &c. The ſame author adds, that the reaſon why the Suitors are ſo urgent to ſend away *Penelope*, is, that ſhe may chuſe to marry ſome one of them, rather than return to *Icarius*; ſo that *Telemachus* only takes hold of their argument for her diſmiſſion, in order to detain her. They addreſſed *Penelope* more for the ſake of her riches than her beauty, (for ſhe muſt be about forty years old) and he tells them, that if he ſends her away againſt her conſent, he muſt reſtore thoſe riches, which they covet more than the perſon of *Penelope*. This I confeſs is very refined; and perhaps it may be ſufficient to take off the objection of covetouſneſs in *Telemachus*, to underſtand no more than what the words at the firſt view ſeem to imply, *viz.* an abhorrence of their riots, deſcribed by *Telemachus* to have ariſen to ſuch a degree as to have almoſt ruined his kingdom, and made their demands impoſſible. I ſee nothing unnatural or mean in this interpretation, eſpecially if we remember that the prodigious diſorders of his family enter into the eſſence of the Poem. The greater the diſorders are, the greater are the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes*.

While

While ſad on foreign ſhores *Ulyſſes* treads,
Or glides a ghoſt with unapparent ſhades,
How to *Icarius* in the bridal hour
Shall I, by waſte undone, refund the dow'r?
How from my father ſhould I vengeance dread?
How would my mother curſe my hated head?
And while in wrath to vengeful Fiends ſhe cries,
How from their hell would vengeful Fiends ariſe?

Abhorr'd

V. 155. *How from my father ſhould I vengeance dread?*] There is an ambiguity in the word *Father*; it may either ſignify *Icarius* or *Ulyſſes*, as *Euſtathius* obſerves: but I think the context determines the perſon to be *Ulyſſes*; for *Telemachus* believes him to be yet living, and conſequently might fear his vengeance, if he offered any indignity to *Penelope*.

V. 157. *And while in wrath to vengeful Fiends ſhe cries,*
How from their hell would vengeful Fiends ariſe?

In the ninth *Iliad* we are told that the father of *Phœnix* imprecated the Furies againſt his ſon.

My ſire with curſes loads my hated head,
And cries, "Ye Furies! barren be his bed.
Infernal Jove, *the vengeful Fiends below,*
And ruthleſs Proſerpine, *confirm'd his vow.*

In the ſame book the Furies hear the curſes of *Althea* upon her ſon,

She beat the ground, and call'd the Pow'rs beneath,
On her own ſon to wreak her brother's death.
Hell heard her curſes from the realms profound,
And the fell Fiends who walk the nightly round.

Theſe paſſages ſhew the opinion the Ancients had of the honour due from children to parents, to be ſuch, that they believed there were Furies

Abhorr'd by all, accurs'd my name would grow,
The earth's diſgrace, and Humankind my foe.
If this diſpleaſe, why urge ye here your ſtay?
Haſte from the court, ye ſpoilers, haſte away:
Waſte in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feaſt, and late carouſe.
But if, to honour loſt, 'tis ſtill decreed
For you my bowl ſhall flow, my flocks ſhall bleed;
Judge and aſſert my right, impartial *Jove!*
By him, and all th' immortal hoſt above,
(A ſacred oath) if heav'n the pow'r ſupply,
Vengeance I vow, and for your wrongs ye die.
With that, two Eagles from a mountain's height
By *Jove*'s command direct their rapid flight;

Swift

Furies particularly commiſſioned to puniſh thoſe who failed in that reſpect, and to fulfil the imprecations made againſt them by their offended parents. There is a greatneſs in this idea, and it muſt have had an effect upon the obedience of the youth. We ſee *Telemachus* is full of the ſenſe of it. *Dacier.*

V. 171, &c. *The Prodigy of the two Eagles.*] This prodigy is uſhered in very magnificently, and the verſes are lofty and ſonorous. The Eagles are *Ulyſſes* and *Telemachus: By* Jove's *command* they fly *from a mountain's height:* This denotes that the two Heroes are inſpired by *Jupiter*, and come from the country to the deſtruction of the Suitors: The eagles fly *with wing to wing conjoin'd*; this ſhews, that they act in concert and unity of councils: At firſt they *float upon the wind*; this implies the calmneſs and ſecreſy of the approach of thoſe Heroes: At laſt they *clang their wings, and hovering beat the ſkies*; this ſhews the violence of the aſſault: *With ardent eyes the rival train they threat.* This, as the Poet himſelf interprets it, denotes the approaching fate of the Suitors. *Then ſailing o'er the domes and tow'rs they fly, Full tow'rd the Eaſt*; this ſignifies that the

Swift they deſcend, with wing to wing conjoin'd,
Stretch their broad plumes, and float upon the wind.
Above th' aſſembled Peers they wheel on high,
And clang their wings, and hov'ring beat the ſky;
With ardent eyes the rival train they threat,
And ſhrieking loud, denounce approaching fate.
They cuff, they tear; their cheeks and necks they rend,
And from their plumes huge drops of blood deſcend:
Then ſailing o'er the domes and tow'rs they fly,
Full tow'rd the Eaſt, and mount into the ſky.
The wond'ring Rivals gaze with cares oppreſt,
And chilling horrors freeze in ev'ry breaſt.
Till big with knowledge of approaching woes
The Prince of Augurs, *Halitherſes*, roſe:
Preſcient he view'd th' aërial tracts, and drew
A ſure preſage from ev'ry wing that flew.
Ye ſons (he cry'd) of *Ithaca*, give ear,
Hear all! but chiefly you, oh Rivals! hear.
Deſtruction ſure o'er all your heads impends;
Ulyſſes comes, and death his ſteps attends.

Suitors alone are not doom'd to deſtruction, but that the men of *Ithaca* are involved in danger, as *Halitherſes* interprets it.

Nor to the Great alone is death decreed;
We, and our guilty Ithaca *muſt bleed.*

See here the natural explication of this prodigy, which is very ingenious! *Euſtathius, verbatim.*

Nor

Nor to the Great alone is death decreed;
We, and our guilty *Ithaca* muſt bleed.
Why ceaſe we then the wrath of heav'n to ſtay?
Be humbled all, and lead, ye Great! the way.
For lo! my words no fancy'd woes relate:
I ſpeak from ſcience, and the voice is Fate.
When great *Ulyſſes* fought the *Phrygian* ſhores
To ſhake with war proud *Ilion*'s lofty tow'rs,
Deeds then undone my faithful tongue foretold:
Heav'n ſeal'd my words, and you thoſe deeds behold.
I ſee (I cry'd) his woes, a countleſs train;
I ſee his friends o'erwhelm'd beneath the main;
How twice ten years from ſhore to ſhore he roams;
Now twice ten years are paſt, and now he comes!

V. 203. *I ſee (I cry'd) his woes———*
I ſee his friends o'erwhelm'd, &c.]

In three lines (obſerves *Euſtathius*) the Poet gives us the whole *Odyſſey* in Miniature: And it is wonderful to think, that ſo plain a ſubject ſhould produce ſuch variety in the proceſs of it. *Ariſtotle* obſerves the ſimplicity of *Homer*'s platform; which is no more than this: A Prince is abſent from his country; *Neptune* deſtroys his companions; in his abſence his family is diſordered by many Princes that addreſs his wife, and plot againſt the life of his only ſon; but at laſt after many ſtorms he returns, puniſhes the Suitors, and re-eſtabliſhes his affairs: This is all that is eſſential to the Poem, the reſt of it is made up of Epiſodes. And yet with what miracles of Poetry (*ſpecioſa miracula*, as *Horace* ſtiles them) has he furniſhed out his Poem?

To whom *Eurymachus* —— Fly, Dotard, fly!
With thy wife dreams, and fables of the ſky.
Go propheſy at home; thy ſons adviſe:
Here thou art ſage in vain — I better read the ſkies.
Unnumber'd Birds glide thro' th' aërial way,
Vagrants of air, and unforeboding ſtray.
Cold in the tomb, or in the deeps below
Ulyſſes lies: oh wert thou laid as low!
Then would that buſy head no broils ſuggeſt,
Nor fire to rage *Telemachus*'s breaſt.
From him ſome bribe thy venal tongue requires,
And Int'reſt, not the God, thy voice inſpires.
His guide-leſs youth, if thy experienc'd age
Miſlead fallacious into idle rage,
Vengeance deſerv'd thy malice ſhall repreſs,
And but augment the wrongs thou would'ſt redreſs.
Telemachus may bid the Queen repair
To great *Icarius*, whoſe paternal care

V. 207. *The ſpeech of* Eurymachus.] It has been obſerved, that *Homer* is the father of Oratory as well as Poetry; and it muſt be confeſſed, that there is not any one branch of it that is not to be found in his Poetry. The Inveſtive, Perſuaſive, Ironical, *&c.* may all be gathered from it. Nothing can be better adapted to the purpoſe than this ſpeech of *Eurymachus*: He is to decry the credit of the predictions of *Halitherſes*: He derides, he threats, and deſcribes him as a venal Prophet. He is ſpeaking to the multitude, and endeavours to bring *Halitherſes* into contempt, and in order to it he uſes him contemptuouſly.

Will

Will guide her paſſion, and reward her choice,
With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.
Till ſhe retires, determin'd we remain,
And both the Prince and Augur threat in vain:
His pride of words, and thy wild dream of Fate,
Move not the brave, or only move their hate.
Threat on, oh Prince! elude the bridal day,
Threat on, till all thy ſtores in waſte decay.
True, *Greece* affords a train of lovely dames,
In wealth and beauty worthy our flames:
But never from this nobler ſuit we ceaſe;
For wealth and beauty leſs than virtue pleaſe.
To whom the Youth. Since then in vain I tell
My num'rous woes, in ſilence let them dwell.
But heav'n, and all the *Greeks*, have heard my wrongs:
To heav'n, and all the *Greeks*, redreſs belongs.

V. 239. ——*All the* Greeks *have heard my wrongs.*] It is neceſſary for the Reader to carry in his mind, that this Aſſembly conſiſts not only of the Peers, but of the people of *Ithaca*: For to the people *Telemachus* here appeals.

It is evident, that the place of the Aſſembly was at leaſt open to the Air in the upper parts: for otherways how ſhould the Eagles be viſible to the Suitors? and ſo very plainly, as to be diſcovered to threat them with their eyes? There was no doubt a place ſet apart for Council, uſually in the market: For *Telemachus* is ſaid to ſeat himſelf in his father's throne, in the beginning of this book: But *Ulyſſes* had been abſent twenty years; and therefore it is evident, that his throne had ſtood in the ſame place for the ſpace of twenty years. It is paſt contradiction, that in *Athens* and other cities of *Greece* there were Βουλευτήρια, public Halls for the conſultation of affairs.

Yet this I aſk (nor be it aſk'd in vain)
A bark to waft me o'er the rolling main;
The realms of *Pyle* and *Sparta* to explore,
And ſeek my royal ſire from ſhore to ſhore:
If, or to *Fame* his doubtful fate be known,
Or to be learn'd from *Oracles* alone?
If yet he lives, with patience I forbear
Till the fleet hours reſtore the circling year;
But if already wand'ring in the train
Of empty ſhades, I meaſure back the main;
Plant the fair column o'er the mighty dead,
And yield his conſort to the nuptial bed.

He ceas'd; and while abaſh'd the Peers attend,
Mentor aroſe, *Ulyſſes'* faithful friend:
[When fierce in arms he fought the ſcenes of war,
" My friend (he cry'd) my palace be thy care;
" Years roll'd on years my god-like ſire decay,
" Guard thou his age, and his behеſts obey."]

Stern

V. 254. Mentor *aroſe*, Ulyſſes' *faithful friend.*] The name of *Mentor* is another inſtance of the gratitude of our Poet's temper, it being the ſame which belonged to a friend of his by whom he was entertained in *Ithaca*, during a defluxion on his eyes which ſeized him in his voyages: and at whoſe houſe he is ſaid to have laid the plan of this Poem. This character of *Mentor* is well ſuſtained by his ſpeech, and by the aſſiſtance he gratefully gives to young *Telemachus* on all occaſions.

V. 258. *Guard thou my Sire, and his behеſts obey.*] The original ſays only, " *Obey the old man.*" *Euſtathius* rightly determines, that the expreſſion means *Laertes.* The Poet loſes no opportunity of giving

Stern as he roſe, he caſt his eyes around
That flaſh'd with rage; and as he ſpoke, he frown'd.
O never, never more! let King be juſt,
Be mild in pow'r, or faithful to his truſt!
Let Tyrants govern with an iron rod,
Oppreſs, deſtroy, and be the ſcourge of God;
Since he who like a father held his reign,
So ſoon forgot, was juſt and mild in vain!
True, while my friend is griev'd, his griefs I ſhare;
Yet now the Rivals are my ſmalleſt care:
They, for the mighty miſchiefs they deviſe,
Ere long ſhall pay—their forfeit lives the price.
But againſt you, ye *Greeks!* ye coward train,
Gods! how my ſoul is mov'd with juſt diſdain?
Dumb ye all ſtand, and not one tongue affords
His injur'd Prince the little aid of words.
While yet he ſpoke, *Leocritus* rejoin'd:
O pride of words, and arrogance of mind!
Would'ſt thou to riſe in arms the *Greeks* adviſe?
Join all your pow'rs! in arms, ye *Greeks*, ariſe!

giving *Ulyſſes* an excellent character; this is as neceſſary as continually to repeat the diſorders of the Suitors.

———*Servetur ad imum*
Qualis ab incœpto proceſſerit, & ſibi conſtet.

This conduct contributes admirably to the deſign of the Poem; and when the Poet in the unravelling of his Fable comes to reward and puniſh the chief actors, we acknowledge his juſtice in the death of the Suitors, and re-eſtabliſhment of *Ulyſſes*.

Yet would your pow'rs in vain our ſtrength oppoſe;
The valiant few o'ermatch an hoſt of foes.
Should great *Ulyſſes* ſtern appear in arms,
While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms;
Tho' to his breaſt his ſpouſe with tranſport flies,
Torn from her breaſt, that hour, *Ulyſſes* dies.
But hence retreating to your domes repair;
To arm the veſſel, *Mentor!* be thy care,
And *Halitherſes!* thine: be each his friend;
Ye lov'd the father: go, the ſon attend.
But yet, I truſt, the boaſter means to ſtay
Safe in the court, nor tempt the wat'ry way.

V. 282. *While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms.*] The original is not without obſcurity: it ſays, ἅμα δαιτὶ: or, *in the time of the banquet*. *Euſtathius* interprets it, τῷ οἴνῳ συναγωνιῶντι αὐτοῖς, *The Wine as it were fighting on their ſide*; and this agrees with what follows.

The deſign of this ſpeech is to deter the people of *Ithaca* from riſing in the cauſe of *Ulyſſes*: *Mentor* ſpeaks juſtly; *Leocritus* inſolently; *Mentor* ſets before them the worth of *Ulyſſes*; *Leocritus* the power of the Suitors: *Mentor* ſpeaks like a brave man; *Leocritus* (obſerves *Euſtathius*) like a coward, who wanting true courage, flies to the aſſiſtance of wine to raiſe a falſe one.

Perhaps it may be objected, that there is not a ſufficient diſtinction in the characters of the ſeveral Suitors; they are all deſcribed as inſolent voluptuaries. But though they agree in this general character, yet there is ſomething diſtinguiſhing in the particular perſons: Thus *Antinous* derides, *Eurymachus* covers villany with mildneſs; *Antinous* is ever the foremoſt in outrage, *Eurymachus* generally his ſecond: A greater diſtinction is neither neceſſary, nor poſſible to be repreſented. What the Poet is to deſcribe, is the inſolence of the Suitors, and the diſorders they create in his family and kingdom; he is obliged to dwell upon theſe circumſtances, becauſe they are eſſential to his deſign: and conſequently that general reſemblance of their characters is not a fault in the Poet.

Then,

Then, with a ruſhing ſound, th' Aſſembly bend,
Diverſe their ſteps: the rival rout aſcend
The royal dome; while ſad the Prince explores
The neighb'ring main, and ſorrowing treads the ſhores.
There, as the waters o'er his hands he ſhed,
The royal ſuppliant to *Minerva* pray'd.
O Goddeſs! who deſcending from the ſkies
Vouchſaf'd thy preſence to my wond'ring eyes,
By whoſe commands the raging deeps I trace,
And ſeek my ſire thro' ſtorms and rolling ſeas!
Hear from thy heav'ns above, oh warrior-maid!
Deſcend once more, propitious to my aid.
Without thy preſence vain is thy command;
Greece, and the rival train thy voice withſtand.
Indulgent to his pray'r, the Goddeſs took
Sage *Mentor*'s form, and thus like *Mentor* ſpoke.

V. 291. *Then, with a ruſhing ſound*, &c.] The Aſſembly which was convened by *Telemachus*, is broke up in a riotous manner by *Leocritus*, who had no right to diſſolve it. This agrees with the lawleſs ſtate of the country in the abſence of its King, and ſhews (ſays *Euſtathius*) that the Suitors had uſurped the chief Authority.

There is a fine contraſt between the behaviour of *Telemachus* and that of the Suitors. They return to repeat their diſorders and debauches; *Telemachus* retires to ſupplicate the Goddeſs of Wiſdom, to aſſiſt him in his enterprizes. Thus the Poet raiſes the character of *Telemachus*; he has ſhewed him to be a youth of a brave ſpirit, a good Speaker, and here repreſents him as a perſon of piety.

O Prince, in early youth divinely wiſe,
Born, the *Ulyſſes* of thy age to riſe!
If to the ſon the father's worth deſcends,
O'er the wide waves ſucceſs thy ways attends:
To tread the walks of death he ſtood prepar'd,
And what he greatly thought, he nobly dar'd.
Were not wiſe ſons deſcendant of the wiſe,
And did not Heroes from brave Heroes riſe,
Vain were my hopes: few ſons attain the praiſe
Of their great ſires, and moſt their ſires diſgrace.
But ſince thy veins paternal virtue fires,
And all *Penelope* thy ſoul inſpires,
Go, and ſucceed! the rivals aims deſpiſe;
For never, never, wicked man was wiſe.
Blind they rejoice, tho' now, ev'n now they fall;
Death haſtes amain: one hour o'erwhelms them all!
And lo, with ſpeed we plow the wat'ry way;
My pow'r ſhall guard thee, and my hand convey:
The winged veſſel ſtudious I prepare,
Thro' ſeas and realms companion of thy care.

V. 307. *The ſpeech of* Minerva.] This ſpeech of *Minerva* is ſuited to encourage a young man to imitate the virtue of his father, and not to ſuffer himſelf to be overcome by any appearance of difficulties. She ſets his father before his eyes, and tells him, there was never any danger which he durſt not encounter; if he ſhould ſuffer himſelf to be diſcouraged, he would prove himſelf an unworthy ſon of a brave Father. *Dacier. Euſtathius.*

Thou

Thou to the court aſcend; and to the ſhores
(When night advances) bear the naval ſtores;
Bread, that decaying man with ſtrength ſupplies,
And gen'rous wine, which thoughtful ſorrow flies.
Mean-while the Mariners by my command
Shall ſpeed aboard, a valiant choſen band.
Wide o'er the bay, by veſſel veſſel rides;
The beſt I chuſe to waft thee o'er the tides.
She ſpoke: to his high dome the Prince returns,
And as he moves, with royal anguiſh mourns.
'Twas riot all, among the lawleſs train;
Boar bled by boar, and goat by goat lay ſlain.
Arriv'd, his hand the gay *Antinous* preſt,
And thus deriding, with a ſmile addreſt.
Grieve not, oh daring Prince! that noble heart;
Ill ſuits gay youth the ſtern heroic part.

V. 341. Antinous's *ſpeech.*] This ſpeech muſt be underſtood ironically: ἔργον τε ἔπος τε is uſed as before, and has relation to the preceding harangues of *Telemachus* to the people, and his intended voyage; by way of deriſion *Antinous* bids him not trouble his brave Spirit in contriving any more Orations, or in any bold attempt to find out *Ulyſſes*; or to act the Orator, or Hero's part.

The Critics have almoſt generally condemned theſe pieces of gayety and raillery, as unworthy of heroic Poetry: if ever they are proper, they muſt be ſo in the mouths of theſe Suitors; perſons of no ſerious or noble characters: Mirth, wine and feaſting is their conſtant employment; and conſequently if they fall into abſurdities, they act ſuitably to their characters. *Milton*, the beſt and greateſt imitator of *Homer*, has followed him unworthily in this reſpect; I mean, has debaſed even this low raillery into greater lowneſs, by playing upon words and ſyllables. But in this place the raillery is not without its effect, by ſhewing the utmoſt contempt of *Telemachus*; and ſurely it is the loweſt degree of calamity to be at once oppreſſed and deſpiſed.

Indulge

Indulge the genial hour, unbend thy ſoul,
Leave thought to Age, and drain the flowing bowl.
Studious to eaſe thy grief, our care provides
The bark, to waft thee o'er the ſwelling tides.
Is this (returns the Prince) for mirth a time?
When lawleſs gluttons riot, mirth's a crime;
The luſcious wines diſhonour'd loſe their taſte,
The ſong is noiſe, and impious is the feaſt.
Suffice it to have ſpent with ſwift decay
The wealth of Kings, and made my youth a prey.
But now the wiſe inſtructions of the ſage,
And manly thoughts inſpir'd by manly age,
Teach me to ſeek redreſs for all my woe,
Here, or in *Pyle*—in *Pyle*, or here, your foe.
Deny your veſſels, ye deny in vain;
A private voyager I paſs the main.
Free breathe the winds, and free the billows flow,
And where on earth I live, I live your foe.
He ſpoke and frown'd, nor longer deign'd to ſtay,
Sternly his hand withdrew, and ſtrode away.
Mean time, o'er all the dome, they quaff, they feaſt,
Deriſive taunts were ſpread from gueſt to gueſt,
And each in jovial mood his mate addreſt.
Tremble ye not, oh friends! and coward fly,
Doom'd by the ſtern *Telemachus* to dye?

To

To *Pyle* or *Sparta* to demand ſupplies,
Big with revenge, the mighty warrior flies:
Or comes from *Ephyré* with poiſons fraught,
And kills us all in one tremendous draught?
Or who can ſay (his gameſome mate replies)
But while the dangers of the deeps he tries,
He, like his ſire, may ſink depriv'd of breath,
And puniſh us unkindly by his death?
What mighty labours would he then create,
To ſeize his treaſures, and divide his ſtate,
The royal Palace to the Queen convey,
Or him ſhe bleſſes in the bridal day!

V. 368. *To* Pyle *or* Sparta *to demand ſupplies.*] It is obſervable, ſays *Euſtathius*, that the Poet had in his choice ſeveral expedients to bring about the deſtruction of the Suitors, but he rejects them, and chuſes the moſt difficult method, out of reverence to truth, being unwilling to falſify the Hiſtories of *Sparta* and *Pylos*. This has a double effect; it furniſhes the Poet with a ſeries of noble incidents; and alſo gives an air of probability to the ſtory of *Ulyſſes* and *Telemachus*.

V. 378. *The royal Palace to the Queen convey.*] The Suitors allot the Palace to *Penelope*: it being, ſays *Euſtathius*, the only thing that they cannot conſume; and adds, that the expreſſion of the Suitors, concerning the labour they ſhould undergo in dividing the ſubſtance of *Ulyſſes*, ſhews the wealth and abundance of that Hero. *Dacier* has found out an alluſion between φόνον in the firſt ſpeech, and πόνον in the ſecond; they differing only in one letter. She calls this a beauty, which ſhe laments ſhe cannot preſerve in her tranſlation. She is the only Commentator that ever was quick-ſighted enough to make the diſcovery. The words have no relation; they ſtand at a ſufficient diſtance; and I believe *Homer* would have thought ſuch trifling unworthy of his Poetry. So that all the honour which accrues from that obſervation muſt be aſcribed (in this caſe, as in many others) to the Commentator, and not the Author.

Mean

Mean time the lofty rooms the Prince ſurveys,
Where lay the treaſures of th' *Ithacian* race:
Here ruddy braſs and gold refulgent blaz'd;
There poliſh'd cheſts embroider'd veſtures grac'd;
Here jars of oil breath'd forth a rich perfume;
There caſks of wine in rows adorn'd the dome.
(Pure flav'rous wine, by Gods in bounty giv'n,
And worthy to exalt the feaſts of heav'n.)
Untouch'd they ſtood, till his long labours o'er
The great *Ulyſſes* reach'd his native ſhore.
A double ſtrength of bars ſecur'd the gates:
Faſt by the door the wiſe *Euryclea* waits;

V. 381. *Where lay the treaſures of th'* Ithacian *race.*] Such paſſages as theſe have ever furniſhed Critics with matter of raillery: They think ſuch houſhold cares unworthy of a King, and that this conduct ſuits better with vulgar perſons of leſs fortune. I confeſs, ſuch deſcriptions now would be ridiculous in a Poet, becauſe unſuitable to our manners. But if we look upon ſuch paſſages as pictures and exact repreſentations of the old world, the Reader will find a ſenſible pleaſure in them.

It is a true obſervation, that the *Iliad* is chiefly ſuitable to the condition of Kings and Heroes; and conſequently filled with circumſtances in which the greateſt part of mankind can have no concern or intereſt: The *Odyſſey* is of more general uſe; the ſtory of it is a ſeries of calamities, which concern every man, as every man may feel them. We can bring the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes* in ſome degree home to ourſelves, and make his condition our own; but what private perſon can ever be in the circumſtances of *Agamemnon* or *Achilles*? What I would infer from this is, that the Reader ought not to take offence at any ſuch deſcriptions, which are only mean as they differ from the faſhions of the latter ages. In the *Iliad*, *Achilles*, when he acts in the common offices of life, and not as an Hero, is liable to the ſame objection. But if the manners of the ancient ages be conſidered, we ſhall be reconciled to the actions of the ancient Heroes; and conſequently to *Homer*.

Euryclea,

Euryclea, who, great *Ops!* thy lineage ſhar'd,
And watch'd all night, all day; a faithful guard.
To whom the Prince. O thou, whoſe guardian care
Nurs'd the moſt wretched King that breathes the air;
Untouch'd and ſacred may theſe veſſels ſtand,
Till great *Ulyſſes* views his native land.
But by thy care twelve urns of wine be fill'd,
Next theſe in worth, and firm thoſe urns be ſeal'd;
And twice ten meaſures of the choiceſt flour
Prepar'd, ere yet deſcends th' evening hour.
For when the fav'ring ſhades of night ariſe,
And peaceful ſlumbers cloſe my mother's eyes,
Me from our coaſt ſhall ſpreading ſails convey,
To ſeek *Ulyſſes* thro' the watry way.
While yet he ſpoke, ſhe fill'd the walls with cries,
And tears ran trickling from her aged eyes.
Oh whither, whither flies my ſon? ſhe cry'd,
To realms, that rocks and roaring ſeas divide?

V. 394. ——*Oh thou, whoſe guardian care*
Nurs'd the moſt wretched King.]

Euryclea was not properly the Nurſe of *Telemachus*, but of *Ulyſſes*; ſo that ſhe is called ſo not in a ſtrict ſenſe, but as one concerned in his education from his infancy, and as a general appellation of honour. *Telemachus* here reſerves the beſt wines for *Ulyſſes*; a leſſon (obſerves *Euſtathius*) that even in the ſmalleſt matters we ought to pay a deference to our parents. Theſe occaſional and ſeemingly-trivial circumſtances are not without their uſe, if not as poetical ornaments, yet as moral inſtructions.

In foreign lands thy father's days decay'd,
And foreign lands contain the mighty dead.
The wat'ry way ill-fated if thou try;
All, all muſt periſh, and by fraud you die!
Then ſtay, my child! ſtorms beat, and rolls the main;
Oh beat thoſe ſtorms, and roll the ſeas in vain!

Far hence (reply'd the Prince) thy fears be driv'n:
Heav'n calls me forth; theſe counſels are of heav'n.
But by the pow'rs that hate the perjur'd, ſwear,
To keep my voyage from the royal ear,
Nor uncompell'd the dang'rous truth betray,
Till twice ſix times deſcends the lamp of day:
Leſt the ſad tale a mother's life impair,
And grief deſtroy what time a while would ſpare.

Thus he. The matron with uplifted eyes
Atteſts th' all-ſeeing Sov'reign of the ſkies.
Then ſtudious ſhe prepares the choiceſt flour,
The ſtrength of wheat, and wines an ample ſtore.

V. 421. *Till twice ſix times deſcends the lamp of day.*] It may be demanded how it was probable, (if poſſible) that the departure of *Telemachus* could be concealed twelve days from the knowledge of ſo fond a mother as *Penelope*? It muſt be allowed, that this would not be poſſible except in a time of ſuch great diſorder as the Suitors created: *Penelope* confined herſelf almoſt continually within her own apartment, and very ſeldom appeared publickly; ſo that there is no improbability in this relation. *Dacier.*

Euſtathius makes a criticiſm upon the words ἀπομόσαι and ἐπομόσαι, the former is uſed negatively, the latter affirmatively; namely, the former in ſwearing *not to perform* a thing, the latter *to perform it.*

While to the rival train the Prince returns,
The martial Goddeſs with impatience burns;
Like thee, *Telemachus*, in voice and ſize,
With ſpeed divine from ſtreet to ſtreet ſhe flies,
She bids the Mariners prepar'd to ſtand,
When Night deſcends, embody'd on the ſtrand.
Then to *Noemon* ſwift ſhe runs, ſhe flies,
And aſks a bark: the chief a bark ſupplies,
And now, declining with his ſloping wheels,
Down ſunk the Sun behind the weſtern hills.
The Goddeſs ſhov'd the veſſel from the ſhores,
And ſtow'd within its womb the naval ſtores.
Full in the op'nings of the ſpacious main
It rides; and now deſcends the ſailor train.
Next, to the court, impatient of delay,
With rapid ſtep the Goddeſs urg'd her way:

V. 432. *She bids the Mariners*, &c.] It is probable that this paſſage of *Minerva* preparing the Mariners, *&c.* is thus to be underſtood: The men of *Ithaca* retaining in memory the ſpeech of *Telemachus*, and believing that what he then ſaid, and now requeſts, was agreeable to juſtice; and having as it were his image graven upon their hearts, voluntarily reſolve to lend him aſſiſtance: So that *Minerva* is to be taken allegorically, to imply that it was every perſon's own Reaſon that induced him to aſſiſt *Telemachus*. *Euſtathius.*

V. 435. Noemon——*the Bark ſupplies.*] It may be aſked why this particularity is neceſſary, and may it not be thought that ſuch a little circumſtance is inſignificant? The anſwer is, that a great deal depends upon this particularity; no leſs than the diſcovery of the voyage of *Telemachus* to the Suitors; and conſequently, whatever the Suitors act in order to intercept him, takes its riſe from this little incident; the fountain is indeed ſmall, but a large ſtream of Poetry flows from it.

There

There ev'ry eye with ſlumbrous chains ſhe bound,
And daſh'd the flowing goblet to the ground.
Drowzy they roſe, with heavy fumes oppreſt,
Reel'd from the palace, and retir'd to reſt.
Then thus, in *Mentor*'s rev'rend form array'd,
Spoke to *Telemachus* the Martial Maid.
Lo! on the ſeas prepar'd the veſſel ſtands;
Th' impatient mariner thy ſpeed demands,
Swift as ſhe ſpoke, with rapid pace ſhe leads,
The footſteps of the Deity he treads.
Swift to the ſhore they move: Along the ſtrand
The ready veſſel rides, the ſailors ready ſtand.
He bids them bring their ſtores; th' attending train
Load the tall bark, and launch into the main.
The Prince and Goddeſs to the ſtern aſcend;
To the ſtrong ſtroke at once the rowers bend.

V. 444. *There ev'ry eye with ſlumbrous chains ſhe bound.*] The words in the original are εὕδειν and ὕπνος, which are not to be taken for being *aſleep*, but *drowzy*; this is evident from the uſage of καθεύδειν, in the concluſion of the firſt book of the *Iliad*, where the ſignification has been miſtaken by moſt tranſlators: They make *Japiter* there to be aſleep; though two lines afterwards, in the ſecond book, *Homer* expreſly ſays,

Th' immortals ſlumber'd on their thrones above:
All, but the ever-waking eyes of Jove.

It may be aſked how *Minerva* can be ſaid to occaſion this drowzineſs in the Suitors, and make them retire ſooner than uſual? *Euſtathius* replies, that the perſon who furniſhed the wine ſupplied it in greater quantities than ordinary, through which wine they contracted a drowzineſs: In this ſenſe *Minerva*, or wiſdom, may be ſaid to aſſiſt the deſigns of *Telemachus*.

Full

Full from the Weſt ſhe bids freſh breezes blow;
The ſable billows foam and roar below.
The chief his orders gives; th' obedient band
With due obſervance wait the chief's command;
With ſpeed the maſt they rear, with ſpeed unbind
The ſpacious ſheet, and ſtretch it to the wind.
High o'er the roaring waves the ſpreading ſails
Bow the tall maſt, and ſwell before the gales;
The crooked keel the parting ſurge divides,
And to the ſtern retreating roll the tides.
And now they ſhip their oars, and crown with wine
The holy Goblet to the Pow'rs divine:

Imploring

V. 460. *She bids freſh breezes blow.*] This alſo is an allegory, and implies that the ſailors had the experience and art to guide the ſhip before the winds; but Poetry, that delights to raiſe every circumſtance, exalts it into the marvellous, and aſcribes it to the Goddeſs of Wiſdom. *Euſtathius.*

V. 464. *With ſpeed the maſt they rear.*] It is obſervable, that *Homer* never paſſes by an opportunity of deſcribing the ſea, or a ſhip under ſail; and in many other places, as well as in this, he dwells largely upon it: I take the reaſon to be, not only becauſe it furniſhed him with variety of poetical images, but becauſe he himſelf having made frequent voyages, had a full Idea of it, and conſequently was delighted with it: This is evident from his conduct in the *Iliad*, where variety of alluſions and ſimilitudes are drawn from the Sea, and are not the ſmalleſt ornaments of his Poetry.

V. 470. ——*And crown with wine*
The holy Goblet to the pow'rs divine.]

This cuſtom of libations was frequent upon all ſolemn occaſions, before meat, before ſleep, voyages, journeys, and in all religious rites, ſacrifices, *&c.* They were always made with wine, pure and unmixed, whence ἄκρατον is a word frequent in ancient Authors. Sometimes they uſed mixed wine in ſacrifices; but *Euſtathius* ſays, that

Imploring all the Gods that reign above,
But chief, the blue-ey'd Progeny of *Jove*.
Thus all the night they ſtem the liquid way,
And end their voyage with the morning ray.

that this mixture was of wine with wine, and not of wine with water; hence came the diſtinction of ἴνοποσδον and ἄοποσδον, the unlawful and lawful libation; wine unmixed was lawful, the mixed unlawful. *Homer* in this place uſes ἐπιτρόφιας κρητῆρας, or *Goblets crown'd with wine*; that is, filled till the wine ſtood above the brim of the Goblet; they eſteemed it an irreverence to the Gods not to fill the cups full, for then only they eſteemed the libation *whole* and *perfect*, ὅλον καὶ τέλειον.

This Book takes up the ſpace of one day and one night: it opens with the morning; the ſpeeches in the Council, with the preparations for the voyage of *Telemachus*, are the ſubject of the day; and the voyage is finiſhed by the next morning. By this laſt circumſtance we may learn that *Ithaca* was diſtant from *Pylos* but one night's voyage, nay ſomething leſs, there being ſome time ſpent after the ſetting of the Sun, in carrying the proviſions from the Palace to the veſſel.

The book conſiſts chiefly in the ſpeeches of *Telemachus* and his friends againſt thoſe of the Suitors. It ſhews the great judgment of the Poet in chuſing this method: hence we ſee the cauſes preceding the effects, and know from what ſpring every action flowed: we are never at a loſs for a reaſon for every incident; the ſpeeches are as it were the ground-work upon which he builds all that relates to the adventures of *Telemachus*.

In the *Iliad*, after the diſſolution of the Council in the firſt book, and the diſſenſion between *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*, we immediately ſee upon what hinge the fable turns. So in the *Odyſſey*, after the Poet has laid before us the warm debates between the Suitors and *Telemachus*, we immediately expect them to act as enemies: The war is declared, and we become judges as well as ſpectators of the ſcenes of action. Thus *Homer* adds the perſpicuity of Hiſtory to the ornaments of Poetry.

THE

THE THIRD BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

The ARGUMENT.

The Interview of *Telemachus* and *Neſtor*.

Telemachus, *guided by* Pallas *in the ſhape of* Mentor, *arrives in the morning at* Pylos; *where* Neſtor *and his ſons are ſacrificing on the ſea-ſhore to* Neptune. Telemachus *declares the occaſion of his coming, and* Neſtor *relates what paſt in their return from* Troy, *how their fleets were ſeparated, and he never ſince heard of* Ulyſſes. *They diſcourſe concerning the death of* Agamemnon, *the revenge of* Oreſtes, *and the injuries of the Suitors.* Neſtor *adviſes him to go to* Sparta, *and inquire further of* Menelaus. *The ſacrifice ending with the night,* Minerva *vaniſhes from them in the form of an Eagle:* Telemachus *is lodged in the Palace. The next morning they ſacrifice a Bullock to* Minerva, *and* Telemachus *proceeds on his journey to* Sparta, *attended by* Piſiſtratus.

The SCENE lies on the Sea-ſhore of *Pylos*.

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MUSEUM

Telemachus *arrives at* Pylos
conducted by Minerva.

THE THIRD BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE ſacred Sun, above the waters rais'd,
Thro' Heav'n's eternal, brazen portals blaz'd;
And wide o'er earth diffus'd his chearing ray,
To Gods and men to give the golden day.

Now

The ſcene is now removed from *Ithaca* to *Pylos*, and with it a new vein of Poetry is opened: Inſtead of the riots of the Suitors, we are entertained with the wiſdom and piety of *Neſtor*. This and the following book are a kind of Supplement to the *Iliad*; the nature of Epic Poetry requires that ſomething ſhould be left to the Imagination of the Reader, nor is the picture to be intirely drawn at full length. *Homer* therefore, to ſatisfy our curioſity, gives an account of the fortunes of thoſe great men, who made ſo noble a figure

Now on the coaſt of *Pyle* the veſſel falls,
Before old *Neleus'* venerable walls.
There, ſuppliant to the Monarch of the flood,
At nine green Theatres the *Pylians* ſtood,

Each

figure at the ſiege of *Troy*. This conduct alſo ſhews his art: Variety gives life and delight; and it is much more neceſſary in Epic than in Comic or Tragic Poetry, ſometimes to ſhift the Scenes, to diverſify and embelliſh the ſtory. But as on the ſtage the Poet ought not to ſtep at once from one part of the world to a too remote country, (for this deſtroys credibility, and the auditor cannot fancy himſelf this minute here, and the next a thouſand miles diſtant) ſo in Epic Poetry, every removal muſt be within the degrees of probability. We have here a very eaſy tranſition; the Poet carries his Hero no farther than he really might ſail in the compaſs of time he allots for his voyage. If he had ſtill dwelt upon the diſorders of the Suitors without interruption, he muſt grow tireſome; but he artfully breaks the thread of their ſtory with beautiful incidents and epiſodes, and reſerves the further recital of their diſorders for the end of his Poem: By this method we ſit down with freſh appetite to the entertainment, and riſe at laſt not cloy'd, but ſatisfied.

V. 2. *Thro' Heav'n's eternal, brazen portals* ——] The original calls Heaven πολύχαλκον, or *brazen*; the reaſon of it ariſes either from the Palaces of the Gods being built of braſs by *Vulcan*; or rather the word implies no more than the Stability of Heaven, which for the ſame reaſon is in other places called σιδήρειον, or *fram'd of iron*. *Euſtathius*.

V. 8. *At nine green Theatres.*] It may be aſked why the Poet is ſo very particular as to mention that the *Pylians* were divided into nine aſſemblies; and may it not ſeem a circumſtance of no importance? *Euſtathius* anſwers from the Ancients, that there were nine cities ſubject to the power of *Neſtor*: five in *Pylos*, the reſt in *Bœotia*; the Poet therefore allots one Bank or Theatre to every city, which conſiſted of five hundred men, the whole number amounting to four thouſand five hundred: Theſe cities furniſhed the like complement of men to *Neſtor* for the war at *Troy*: He ſailed in ninety veſſels, and allowing fifty men to each veſſel, they amount to that number. Hence it appears that this was a national ſacrifice, every city furniſhed nine bulls, and by conſequence the whole nation were partakers of it.

V. ibid. *The ſacrifice of the* Pylians.] This was a very ſolemn ſacrifice of the *Pylians*: How comes it then to paſs, that *Homer*

paſſes

Each held five hundred, (a deputed train)
At each, nine oxen on the ſand lay ſlain.
They taſte the entrails, and the altars load
With ſmoaking thighs, an offering to the God.
Full for the port the *Ithacenſians* ſtand,
And furl their ſails, and iſſue on the land.
Telemachus already preſt the ſhore;
Not firſt, the Pow'r of Wiſdom march'd before,
And ere the ſacrificing throng he join'd,
Admoniſh'd thus his well attending mind.

Proceed, my ſon! this youthful ſhame expel;
An honeſt buſineſs never bluſh to tell.
To learn what Fates thy wretched ſire detain,
We paſt the wide, immeaſurable main.
Meet then the Senior far renown'd for ſenſe,
With rev'rent awe, but decent confidence:

paſſes it over in one line? *Euſtathius* anſwers, that the occaſion diſallows a longer deſcription, and *Homer* knows when to ſpeak, and when to be ſilent. He chuſes to carry on the adventures of *Telemachus*, rather than amuſe himſelf in deſcriptions that contribute nothing to the ſtory; he finds a time of more leiſure in the latter part of this book, and there he deſcribes it at length.

V. 11. *They taſte the entrails.*] That is, every perſon eat a ſmall portion of the ſacrifice, and by this method every perſon became partaker of it.

There is nothing in *Homer* that ſhews where this ſacrifice was offered, whether in a Temple, or in the open air. But *Euſtathius* tells us from *Strabo*, that it was in the Temple of *Samian Neptune*, ἐν ἱερῷ Σαμίου Ποσειδῶνος.

Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies;
And ſure he will: For Wiſdom never lies.
Oh tell me, *Mentor!* tell me, faithful guide,
(The youth with prudent modeſty reply'd)
How ſhall I meet, or how accoſt the Sage,
Unſkill'd in ſpeech, nor yet mature of age?
Awful th' approach, and hard the taſk appears,
To queſtion wiſely men of riper years.
To whom the Martial Goddeſs thus rejoin'd.
Search, for ſome thoughts, thy own ſuggeſting mind;
And others, dictated by heav'nly pow'r,
Shall riſe ſpontaneous in the needful hour.
For nought unproſp'rous ſhall thy ways attend,
Born with good omens, and with heav'n thy friend.

She

V. 25. *Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies;*
And ſure he will: For Wiſdom never lies.]

This ſentiment is truly noble, and as nobly expreſſed: the ſimplicity of the diction correſponds with that of the thought. *Homer* in many places teſtifies the utmoſt abhorrence of a Lye. This verſe is twice repeated in the preſent book, as well as in ſome others; and nothing can be ſtronger in the ſame view than that of *Achilles* in the ninth *Iliad*:

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart deteſts him as the gates of hell.

V. 38. *Born with good omens, and with heav'n thy friend.*] There is ſome obſcurity in the *Greek* expreſſion, and the ancient Critics have made it more obſcure by their falſe interpretations; they imagine that the Poet only meant to ſay, that *Telemachus* was the legitimate ſon of *Penelope* and *Ulyſſes*. *Euſtathius.*

Dacier

She ſpoke, and led the way with ſwifteſt ſpeed:
As ſwift, the youth purſu'd the way ſhe led;
And join'd the band before the ſacred fire,
Where ſat, encompaſt with his ſons, the Sire.
The youth of *Pylos*, ſome on pointed wood
Transfix'd the fragments, ſome prepar'd the food.
In friendly throngs they gather to embrace
Their unknown gueſts, and at the banquet place.
Piſiſtratus was firſt, to graſp their hands,
And ſpread ſoft hides upon the yellow ſands;

Along

Dacier very juſtly condemns this explication, as unworthy of *Homer*; and gives us a more plain and natural interpretation; *viz.* "You were not born in deſpight of the Gods, that is, you are well "made, and of a good preſence, you have good inclinations, and "in a word, your birth is happy." She explains τραφέμεν after the ſame manner. "You were not educated in deſpight of the "Gods;" that is, "the Gods have bleſſed your education:" This explication ſeems to be juſt, and anſwers perfectly the deſign of *Minerva*; which was to give a decent aſſurance to *Telemachus*: You are a perſon, ſays the Goddeſs, of a good preſence, and happy education, why then ſhould you be aſhamed to appear before *Neſtor*?

V. 48. *And ſpread ſoft hides upon the yellow ſands.*] It is with great pleaſure that I read ſuch paſſages in an Author of ſo great antiquity, as are pictures of the ſimplicity of thoſe heroic ages: It is the remark of *Euſtathius*, that *Piſiſtratus* the ſon of a King does not ſeat theſe ſtrangers upon purple Tapeſtry, or any other coſtly furniture, but upon the ſkins of beaſts, that had nothing to recommend them but their ſoftneſs; being ſpread upon the ſand of the ſea-ſhores.

This whole paſſage pleaſes me extremely; there is a ſpirit of true Devotion, Morality and good Senſe in it; and the decency of behaviour between *Neſtor* and *Telemachus* is deſcribed very happily: *Neſtor* ſhews great benevolence to *Telemachus*; *Telemachus* great reverence to *Neſtor*: the modeſty of the one, and the humanity of the other, are worthy of our obſervation. We ſee the ſame picture of *Neſtor* in the *Odyſſey*, that was drawn of him in the *Iliad*, with this only

Along the ſhore th' illuſtrious pair he led,
Where *Neſtor* ſat with youthful *Thraſymed*.
To each a portion of the feaſt he bore,
And held a golden goblet foaming o'er;
Then firſt approaching to the elder gueſt,
The latent Goddeſs in theſe words addreſt.
Whoe'er thou art, whom fortune brings to keep
Theſe rites of *Neptune*, Monarch of the deep,
Thee firſt it fits, oh ſtranger! to prepare
The due libation and the ſolemn pray'r:
Then give thy friend to ſhed the ſacred wine:
Tho' much thy younger, and his years like mine,
He too, I deem, implores the pow'rs divine:
For all mankind alike require their grace,
All born to want; a miſerable race!
He ſpake, and to her hand preferr'd the bowl:
A ſecret pleaſure touch'd *Athena*'s ſoul,
To ſee the pref'rence due to ſacred age
Regarded ever by the juſt and ſage.
Of Ocean's King ſhe then implores the grace.
Oh thou! whoſe arms this ample globe embrace,
Fulfil our wiſh, and let thy glory ſhine
On *Neſtor* firſt, and *Neſtor*'s royal line;

difference, that there he was a Counſellor of War, here he is painted in ſofter colours, ruling his people in peace, and diffuſing a ſpirit of piety through his whole territories. He had now ſurvived the war of *Troy* almoſt ten years; and the Gods reward the old age of this wiſe and religious Prince with peace and happineſs.

Next

Next grant the *Pylian* ſtates their juſt deſires,
Pleas'd with their Hecatomb's aſcending fires;
Laſt deign *Telemachus* and me to bleſs,
And crown our voyage with deſir'd ſucceſs.
Thus ſhe; and having paid the rite divine,
Gave to *Ulyſſes'* ſon the roſy wine.
Suppliant he pray'd. And now the victims dreſt
They draw, divide, and celebrate the feaſt.
The banquet done, the Narrative old man,
Thus mild, the pleaſing conference began.
Now, gentle gueſts! the genial banquet o'er,
It fits to aſk ye, what your native ſhore,
And whence your race? on what adventure, ſay,
Thus far ye wander thro' the wat'ry way?
Relate, if buſineſs, or the thirſt of gain,
Engage your journey o'er the pathleſs main?

Where

V. 74. *Laſt, deign* Telemachus *and me to bleſs* ——] Since *Minerva* here mentions the name of *Telemachus* in her prayer; how comes it to paſs, that *Neſtor* is at a loſs to know *Telemachus*? *Minerva* ſat cloſe by *Neſtor*; he muſt therefore be ſuppoſed to hear the prayer; and yet in the following lines he inquires who theſe ſtrangers are? We can ſcarce imagine *Neſtor* ignorant that the ſon of *Ulyſſes* was named *Telemachus*, there being ſo ſtrict a friendſhip between *Neſtor* and *Ulyſſes*. Perhaps therefore *Minerva* prayed in ſecret mentally; or perhaps *Neſtor* might not take notice of what was not addreſt immediately to him, and conſequently make inquiry about it for the greater certainty.

V. 86. *Relate, if buſineſs, or the thirſt of gain,* &c.] If we form our images of perſons and actions in ancient times, from the images of perſons and actions in modern ages, we ſhall fall into great miſtakes: Thus in the preſent paſſage, if we annex the ſame idea of Piracy, as it was practiſed three thouſand years paſt, to Piracy as it is

Where ſavage Pirates ſeek thro' ſeas unknown
The lives of others, vent'rous of their own.
Urg'd by the precepts by the Goddeſs giv'n,
And fill'd with confidence infus'd from heav'n,
The Youth, whom *Pallas* deſtin'd to be wiſe
And fam'd among the ſons of men, replies.
Inquir'ſt thou, father! from what coaſt we came?
(Oh grace and glory of the *Grecian* name!)
From where high *Ithaca* o'erlooks the floods,
Brown with o'er-arching ſhades and pendent woods,
Us to theſe ſhores our filial duty draws,
A private ſorrow, not a public cauſe.
My ſire I ſeek, where-e'er the voice of fame
Has told the glories of his noble name,
The great *Ulyſſes*; fam'd from ſhore to ſhore
For valour much, for hardy ſuff'ring more.
Long time with thee before proud *Ilion*'s wall
In arms he fought; with thee beheld her fall.

practiſed in our ages; what can be a greater affront than this inquiry of *Neſtor*? But, ſays *Euſtathius*, Piracy was formerly not only accounted lawful, but honourable. I doubt not but *Thucydides* had this paſſage in view, when he ſays, that the ancient Poets introduce men inquiring of thoſe who frequent the ſea, if they be Pirates, as a thing no way ignominious. *Thucydides* tells us in the ſame place, that all thoſe who lived on the ſea-coaſt, or in the Iſlands, maintained themſelves by frequent inroads upon unfortified towns, and if ſuch piracies were nobly performed, they were accounted glorious. *Herodotus* alſo writes, that many of the Ancients, eſpecially about *Thrace*, thought it ignominious to live by labouring the ground, but to live by piracy and plunder was eſteemed a life of honour. *Euſtathius*.

Of

Of all the chiefs, this Hero's fate alone
Has *Jove* reſerv'd, unheard of, and unknown;
Whether in fields by hoſtile fury ſlain,
Or ſunk by tempeſts in the gulphy main?
Of this to learn, oppreſt with tender fears,
Lo, at thy knee his ſuppliant ſon appears.
If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,
Have learnt his fate, the whole dark ſtory clear:
And oh! whate'er heav'n deſtin'd to betide,
Let neither flatt'ry ſmooth, nor pity hide.
Prepar'd I ſtand: he was but born to try
The lot of man; to ſuffer, and to die.
Oh then, if ever thro' the ten years war
The wiſe, the good *Ulyſſes* claim'd thy care;
If e'er he join'd thy council, or thy ſword,
True in his deed, and conſtant to his word;
Far as thy mind thro' backward time can ſee,
Search all thy ſtores of faithful memory:
'Tis ſacred truth I aſk, and aſk of thee.
To him experienc'd *Neſtor* thus rejoin'd.
O friend! what ſorrows doſt thou bring to mind?
Shall

V. 125. *The ſpeech of* Neſtor.] *Euſtathius* obſerves the modeſty of *Neſtor*: *Telemachus* had aſcribed the fall of *Troy* in a great meaſure to *Neſtor*; but *Neſtor* ſpeaks not in particular of himſelf, but is content with his ſhare of glory in common with other warriors; he ſpeaks in the plural number, and joins all the *Greeks* as in the war, ſo in the glory of it. *Neſtor* mentions the ſufferings of the *Greeks* by ſea, as well as by land, during the ſiege of *Troy*: To underſtand

Shall I the long, laborious ſcene review,
And open all the wounds of *Greece* anew?
What toils by ſea! where dark in queſt of prey
Dauntleſs we rov'd; *Achilles* led the way:
What toils by land! where mixt in fatal fight
Such numbers fell, ſuch Heroes ſunk to night:
There *Ajax* great, *Achilles* there the brave,
There wiſe *Patroclus*, fill an early grave:
There too my ſon——ah once my beſt delight,
Once ſwift of foot, and terrible in fight,
In whom ſtern courage with ſoft virtue join'd,
A faultleſs body, and a blameleſs mind:

this, it is neceſſary to remember, that the *Greeks* made many expeditions againſt other places during the war, both by ſea and land, as appears from many paſſages in the *Iliad*, particularly from what *Achilles* ſays in the ninth book.

V. 133. *There* Ajax *great*, Achilles *there the brave.*] I have obſerved, that the Poet inſerts into the *Odyſſey* ſeveral incidents that happened after the fall of *Troy*, and by that method agreeably diverſifies his Poetry, and ſatisfies the curioſity of the reader. *Euſtathius* remarks here, that he gives a title of honour to all the Heroes he mentions, except only to *Achilles*. *Achilles* had been the occaſion of the ſufferings and death of many of the *Greeks* by his Anger, and obſtinacy in refuſing to obey *Agamemnon*; therefore while *Neſtor* is lamenting the calamities of the *Greeks*, he paſſes over *Achilles* without any honourable mention, who had ſo greatly added to their ſufferings. But I think this remark chimerical: one may as well ſay *Achilles* needed no Epithet to diſtinguiſh him.

It is with pleaſure I ſee the old man dwell upon the praiſe of *Antilochus:* The father enlarges upon the fame of the ſon; he gives him four epithets of glory; and while *Ajax* is only praiſed as a warrior, *Antilochus* is great and good, excellent in the ſtanding fight, or ſwift to purſue an enemy. *Longinus* has obſerved upon the beauty of this paſſage.

Antilochus

Antilochus —— what more can I relate?
How trace the tedious ſeries of our fate?
Not added years on years my taſk could cloſe,
The long hiſtorian of my country's woes:
Back to thy native Iſlands might'ſt thou ſail,
And leave half-heard the melancholy tale.
Nine painful years, on that deteſted ſhore
What ſtratagems we form'd, what toils we bore?
Still lab'ring on, till ſcarce at laſt we found
Great *Jove* propitious, and our conqueſt crown'd.
Far o'er the reſt thy mighty father ſhin'd,
In wit, in prudence, and in force of mind.
Art thou the ſon of that illuſtrious ſire?
With joy I graſp thee, and with love admire.
So like your voices, and your words ſo wiſe,
Who finds thee younger muſt conſult his eyes.
Thy Sire and I were one; nor vary'd ought
In public ſentence, or in private thought;

V. 149. *Far o'er the reſt thy mighty father ſhin'd.*] *Neſtor* ſpeaks of *Ulyſſes* as an inſeparable friend; and it ſhews an excellent diſpoſition in them both, to be rivals, and yet without envy. But the art of *Neſtor* is remarkable; he firſt gives the character to *Ulyſſes* of being ſuperior in wiſdom to all the *Greeks*; and yet at laſt he finds a way ſecretly to ſet himſelf on a level with him, if not above him: We ever, ſays he, thought the ſame thoughts, and were ever of the ſame ſentiments; which though it may imply that they were of equal wiſdom, yet there is room left for it to ſignify, that *Ulyſſes* always aſſented to the wiſdom of *Neſtor*. *Euſtathius*.

Alike to Council or th' Aſſembly came,
With equal ſouls, and ſentiments the ſame.
But when (by wiſdom won) proud *Ilion* burn'd,
And in their ſhips the conqu'ring *Greeks* return'd;
'Twas God's high will the victors to divide,
And turn th'-event, confounding human pride:
Some he deſtroy'd, ſome ſcatter'd as the duſt,
(Not all were prudent, and not all were juſt)
Then *Diſcord*, ſent by *Pallas* from above,
Stern Daughter of the great Avenger *Jove*,

V. 157. *The Council or the Aſſembly.*] There is a remarkable difference between βουλὴ and ἀγορὰ. The former denotes a ſelect number of men aſſembled in council, the latter a public aſſembly where all the people were preſent. *Euſtathius.*

V. 165. *Sent by* Pallas ———] *Neſtor* in modeſty conceals the reaſon of the anger of the Goddeſs; out of reſpect to *Ajax* the *Locrian*, who was then dead: The crime of *Ajax* was the violation of *Caſſandra* even in the temple of *Minerva* before her image. But why ſhould the Goddeſs be angry at others for the crime of *Ajax*? This is becauſe they omitted to puniſh the offender. If *Ajax* was criminal in offending, others are criminal for not puniſhing the offence. *Euſtathius.*

The crime of *Ajax* is mentioned in *Virgil*, *Æn.* 1.

———*Pallaſne exurere claſſem*
Argivûm, atque ipſos potuit ſubmergere ponto,
Unius ob noxam, & furias Ajacis Oilei? &c.

Could angry *Pallas* with revengeful ſpleen
The *Grecian* navy burn, and drown the men?
She for the fault of one offending foe,
The bolts of *Jove* himſelf preſum'd to throw. *Dryd.*

Virgil borrow'd the deſcription of the puniſhment of *Ajax* from the fourth of the *Odyſſey*.

The

The Brother-Kings inspir'd with fell debate;
Who call'd to council all th' *Achaian* state,
But call'd untimely (not the sacred rite
Observ'd, nor heedful of the setting light,
Nor Herald sworn, the session to proclaim)
Sour with debauch, a reeling tribe they came.
To these the cause of meeting they explain,
And *Menelaus* moves to cross the main;
Not so the King of Men: he will'd to stay;
The sacred rites and hecatombs to pay,
And calm *Minerva*'s wrath. Oh blind to fate!
The Gods not lightly change their love, or hate.
With ire-full taunts each other they oppose,
'Till in loud tumult all the *Greeks* arose.

V. 168, &c. *Who call'd to council* ——
But call'd untimely, &c.]

It may seem at first view, that the Poet affirms the night to be an improper season to convene a Council. This is not his meaning: In the *Iliad*, there are several councils by night; nay, ἐν νυκτὶ βουλὴ is used proverbially to express the best concerted councils. What therefore *Nestor* here condemns is the calling not a select, but a public assembly of the soldiers in the night, when they are in no danger of an enemy, and when they are apt to fly into insolence through wine, and the joy of victory. The night is then undoubtedly an ill chosen season: because the licence of the soldier cannot be so well restrained by night as by day. *Eustathius.*

V. 177. *Oh blind to fate!*] It may be asked why *Nestor* condemns so solemnly this Hero, calling him Νήπιος, when he describes him in so pious an Action? This is not because the Gods are implacable, for as *Homer* himself writes, Στρεπτοὶ δὲ καὶ θεοὶ αὐτοὶ; but because he vainly imagined that they would so soon be appeased, without any Justice done upon the offender; Θεὸν ῥᾳδιὼς παλίντροπον are the words of *Eustathius*.

Now

Now diff'rent counſels ev'ry breaſt divide,
Each burns with rancour to the adverſe ſide:
Th' unquiet night ſtrange projects entertain'd;
(So *Jove*, that urg'd us to our fate, ordain'd.)
We, with the riſing morn our ſhips unmoor'd,
And brought our captives and our ſtores aboard;
But half the people with reſpect obey'd
The King of Men, and at his bidding ſtay'd.
Now on the wings of winds our courſe we keep,
(For God had ſmooth'd the waters of the deep)
For *Tenedos* we ſpread our eager oars,
There land, and pay due victims to the pow'rs:
To bleſs our ſafe return we join in pray'r,
But angry *Jove* diſpers'd our vows in air,
And rais'd new diſcord. Then (ſo Heav'n decreed)
Ulyſſes firſt and *Neſtor* diſagreed:
Wiſe as he was, by various Counſels ſway'd,
He there, tho' late, to pleaſe the Monarch, ſtay'd.

V. 197. *Wiſe as he was, by various counſels ſway'd,*
He there, tho' late, to pleaſe the Monarch ſtay'd.]

It is with great addreſs that *Neſtor* relates the return of *Ulyſſes* to *Agamemnon*; he aſcribes it not directly to *Ulyſſes*, but to his aſſociates in the voyage; he mollifies it, in complaiſance to *Telemachus*. But *Neſtor*, according to *Dacier*, conceals the true reaſon of his return; it was not to pleaſe *Agamemnon*, but out of fear of the Goddeſs *Minerva*, whoſe ſtatue he he had taken by force from *Troy*: to appeaſe that Goddeſs, he returns to join in ſacrifice with *Agamemnon*. *Euſtathius*.

But

But I, determin'd, ſtem the foamy floods,
Warn'd of the coming fury of the Gods.
With us, *Tydides* fear'd, and urg'd his haſte:
And *Menelaus* came, but came the laſt.
He join'd our veſſels in the *Leſbian* bay,
While yet we doubted of our wat'ry way;
If to the right to urge the pilot's toil,
(The ſafer road) beſide the *Pſyrian* iſle;
Or the ſtrait courſe to rocky *Chios* plow,
And anchor under *Mimas'* ſhaggy brow?
We ſought direction of the pow'r divine:
The God propitious gave the guiding ſign;
Thro' the mid ſeas he bids our navy ſteer,
And in *Eubea* ſhun the woes we fear.
The whiſtling winds already wak'd the ſky;
Before the whiſtling winds the veſſels fly,
With rapid ſwiftneſs cut the liquid way,
And reach *Gereſtus* at the point of day.
There hecatombs of bulls to *Neptune* ſlain
High flaming pleaſe the Monarch of the main.
The fourth day ſhone, when all their labours o'er
Tydides' veſſels touch'd the wiſh'd-for ſhore:

V. 200. *Warn'd of the coming fury of the Gods.*] It may be aſked how *Neſtor* attained this knowledge of the evils which the Gods were preparing? *Euſtathius* aſcribes it to his great Wiſdom, which gave him an inſight into futurity. *Dacier* with more reaſon tells us, that *Neſtor* knew that *Minerva* had been offended, and might conſequently apprehend a puniſhment was to be inflicted for the offence.

But

But I to *Pylos* ſcud before the gales,
The God ſtill breathing on my ſwelling ſails;
Sep'rate from all, I ſafely landed here;
Their fates or fortunes never reach'd my ear.
Yet what I learn'd, attend; as here I ſate,
And aſk'd each voyager each Heroe's fate;
Curious to know, and willing to relate.

Safe reach'd the *Myrmidons* their native land,
Beneath *Achilles'* warlike ſon's command.
Thoſe, whom the heir of great *Apollo*'s art,
Brave *Philoctetes*, taught to wing the dart;
And thoſe whom *Idomen* from *Ilion*'s plain
Had led, ſecurely croſt the dreadful main.

V. 221. *But I to* Pylos, &c.] *Euſtathius* obſerves from the Antients, that the Poet with great judgment ſuſpends, and breaks off this relation of *Neſtor*; by this method he has an opportunity to carry *Telemachus* to other countries, and inſert into his Poem the ſtory of *Menelaus* and *Helen*: This method likewiſe gives an air of probability to what he writes; the Poet ſeems afraid to deceive, and when he ſends *Telemachus* to other parts for better intelligence, he ſeems to conſult truth and exactneſs.

V. 229. Achilles' *warlike Son.*] The ſon of *Achilles* was named *Neoptolemus*, by others *Pyrrhus*; his ſtory is this: When he had reached *Theſſaly* with the *Myrmidons* of *Achilles*, by the advice of *Thetis* he ſet fire to his veſſels; and being warned by *Helenus*, from the oracles, to fix his habitation where he found a houſe whoſe foundations were iron, whoſe walls were wood, and whoſe roof was wool; he took his journey on foot, and coming to a certain lake of *Epirus*, he found ſome perſons fixing their ſpears with the point downwards into the earth, and covering the tops of them with their cloaks, and after this manner making their tents: he looked upon the oracle as fulfilled, and dwelt there. Afterwards having a ſon by *Andromache* the wife of *Hector*, he named him *Moloſſus*, from whom the region took the name of *Moloſſia*. From this country are *Moloſſi canes*, mentioned by *Virgil*. *Euſtathius*.

How

How *Agamemnon* touch'd his *Argive* coaſt,
And how his life by fraud and force he loſt,
And how the Murd'rer paid his forfeit breath;
What lands ſo diſtant from that ſcene of death
But trembling heard the Fame? and heard, admire
How well the ſon appeas'd his ſlaughter'd ſire!
Ev'n to th' unhappy, that unjuſtly bleed,
Heav'n gives Poſterity, t' avenge the deed.
So fell *Ægyſthus*; and may'ſt thou, my friend,
(On whom the virtues of thy ſire deſcend)
Make future times thy equal act adore,
And be what brave *Oreſtes* was before!
The prudent youth reply'd. O thou the grace
And laſting glory of the *Grecian* race!
Juſt was the vengeance, and to lateſt days
Shall long poſterity reſound the praiſe.
Some God this arm with equal proweſs bleſs!
And the proud Suitors ſhall its force confeſs:

V. 242. *So fell* Ægyſthus; *and may'ſt thou my friend,* &c.] *Neſtor* introduces the mention of *Ægyſthus* very artfully; it is to raiſe an emulation in *Telemachus* to revenge *Ulyſſes*, as *Oreſtes* had *Agamemnon*; it has the intended effect, and we find that *Telemachus* dwells upon his ſtory with a virtuous envy; yet at the ſame time with great modeſty; *Euſtathius* gives a different reading in

——— ἰσσομένοισι πύθεσθαι, or
ἰσσομένοισιν ἀοιδήν.

both the expreſſions are uſed in *Homer*, the preference is therefore ſubmitted to the Reader.

Injurious

Injurious men! who while my ſoul is ſore
Of freſh Affronts, are meditating more.
But heav'n denies this honour to my hand,
Nor ſhall my father repoſſeſs the land:
The father's fortune never to return,
And the ſad ſon's to ſuffer and to mourn!

Thus he; and *Neſtor* took the word: My ſon,
Is it then true, as diſtant rumours run,
That crowds of rivals for thy mother's charms
Thy Palace fill with inſults and alarms?
Say, is the fault, thro' tame ſubmiſſion thine?
Or leagu'd againſt thee, do thy people join,
Mov'd by ſome Oracle, or voice divine?
And yet who knows, but ripening lies in fate
An hour of vengeance for th' afflicted ſtate;
When great *Ulyſſes* ſhall ſuppreſs theſe harms,
Ulyſſes ſingly, or all *Greece* in arms.

But

V. 264. *Mov'd by ſome Oracle, or voice divine.*] The words in the original are, *following the voice of ſome God*, that is, ſome Oracle; *Homer* does not confine the expreſſion either to a good or bad ſenſe; but the context plainly ſhews, that they muſt be underſtood in a bad ſenſe; namely to imply, that the people had recourſe to pretended Oracles to juſtify their rebellion. This is evident from what follows, where *Neſtor* encourages *Telemachus* to expect that *Ulyſſes* may puniſh them for their crimes, ἀποτίσεσθαι ἔλθων——— if there had been no crime, there ought to be no puniſhment.

V. 268. Ulyſſes *ſingly, or all* Greece *in arms.*] The Poet ſhews his great judgment in preparing the Reader for the deſtruction of the Suitors; that great Cataſtrophe is managed by few hands, and it might ſeem incredible that ſo few could deſtroy ſo many: the Poet therefore, to give an air of truth to his action, frequently inculcates the

But if *Athena*, War's triumphant maid,
The happy ſon, will, as the father, aid,
(Whoſe fame and ſafety was her conſtant care
In ev'ry danger and in every war:
Never on man did heav'nly favour ſhine
With rays ſo ſtrong, diſtinguiſh'd and divine,
As thoſe with which *Minerva* mark'd thy ſire)
So might ſhe love thee, ſo thy ſoul inſpire!

the aſſiſtance of *Pallas*, which muſt at leaſt ſhew, that ſuch a great exploit is not impoſſible to be executed by ſtratagems and valour: It is by art, not ſtrength, that *Ulyſſes* conquers.

All Greece *in arms.*

This is ſpoken in a general ſenſe, and comprehends not only the ſubjects of *Ulyſſes*, or even the *Pylians* and *Spartans*, but implies, that all the *Greeks* would riſe in the cauſe of *Ulyſſes*. What the ſuitors had ſpoken ſcoffingly in the preceding book, *viz.* that *Telemachus* was ſailing to *Pyle* or *Sparta* for *ſupplies*, appears in this not to be impracticable; ſo that it was choice and not neceſſity that determined the Poet to make uſe of no ſuch eaſy expedients for the deſtruction of the Suitors. *Euſtathius*

It may be added, that the very nature of Epic Poetry, and of the *Odyſſey* in particular, requires ſuch a conduct: In the *Iliad Achilles* is the chief agent, and performs almoſt all the great actions; *Æneas* is painted after the ſame manner by *Virgil*; the one kills *Hector*, the other *Turnus*, both which are the deciſive actions: It was equally neceſſary to exalt the character of *Ulyſſes*, by bringing him into difficulties from which he is perſonally to extricate himſelf: This the Poet ſufficiently brings about by refuſing all the eaſy methods for his re-eſtabliſhment, becauſe the more difficult ways are moſt conducive to the honour of his Hero: Thus as *Achilles* and *Æneas* kill *Hector* and *Turnus* with their own hands, ſo the Suitors fall chiefly by the hand of *Ulyſſes*. It is neceſſary for the Hero of the Poem to execute the deciſive action, for by this method the Poet compleats his character, his own greatneſs ſurmounts all difficulties, and he goes off the ſtage with the utmoſt advantage, by leaving a noble character upon the mind of the ſpectators.

Soon

Soon ſhou'd their hopes in humble duſt be laid,
And long oblivion of the bridal bed.
Ah! no ſuch hope (the Prince with ſighs replies)
Can touch my breaſt; that bleſſing heav'n denies.
Ev'n by celeſtial favour were it giv'n,
Fortune or Fate wou'd croſs the will of heav'n.
What words are theſe, and what imprudence thine?
(Thus interpos'd the Martial maid divine)
Forgetful youth! but know, the Pow'r above
With eaſe can ſave each object of his love;
Wide as his will, extends his boundleſs grace;
Nor loſt in time, nor circumſcrib'd by place.

V. 282. *Fortune or Fate wou'd croſs the will of Heav'n.*] It may be aſked how an expreſſion ſo near blaſphemy, as *Euſtathius* obſerves, could eſcape a perſon of ſuch piety as *Telemachus*? 'Tis true, the Poet makes *Minerva* herſelf correct it; but yet the objection remains, *viz.* how could *Telemachus* ſpeak it? I think ſince the Poet himſelf condemns it, we may give it up as an indecency in *Telemachus*; it is natural for men in deſpair (and that was the condition of *Telemachus*) to uſe a vehemence of expreſſion, and this might tranſport *Telemachus* beyond the bounds of prudence. The only poſſible way that occurs to me to take off the impiety, is to have recourſe to Deſtiny: It was the opinion of the Antients, that the Gods could not alter Deſtiny: and then *Telemachus* may mean no more, than that it was decreed by the Deſtinies that *Ulyſſes* ſhall return no more, ſo the Gods themſelves could not reſtore him.

Thus in the 15th of the *Metamorphoſis*, *Venus* in vain applies to the Gods to preſerve *Julius Cæſar*.

——*Superoſque movet, qui rumpere quanquam*
Ferrea non poſſunt veterum decreta ſororum, &c.

And a little lower *Jupiter* ſays to *Venus*,

——*Sola inſuperabile fatum*,
Nata movere paras?

Happier

Happier his lot, who many ſorrows paſt,
Long-lab'ring gains his natal ſhore at laſt;
Than who too ſpeedy, haſtes to end his life
By ſome ſtern ruffian, or adult'rous wife.
Death only is the lot which none can miſs,
And all is poſſible to heav'n, but this.
The beſt, the deareſt fav'rite of the ſky
Muſt taſte that cup, for man is born to die.
Thus check'd, reply'd *Ulyſſes*' prudent heir:
Mentor, no more——the mournful thought forbear;

V. 289. *Happier his lot, who, &c.*] Nothing can be better imagined to encourage *Telemachus*, than what the Poet here delivers: She ſets *Agamemnon* in oppoſition to *Ulyſſes*: *Agamemnon* made a ſpeedy voyage to his country, and there fell by treachery; *Ulyſſes* has long been abſent, but yet is happier than *Agamemnon*: the Gods perhaps reſerve him for better fortunes, at leaſt nothing can be concluded from his long abſence, and this is ſufficient to teach *Telemachus* not to deſpair. *Euſtathius.*

V. 294. *And all is poſſible to heav'n, but this.*] What *Minerva* here ſays juſtifies the remark I made, that what *Telemachus* ſeemed to have ſpoken raſhly, may be ſoftened, if not vindicated, by having recourſe to Deſtiny: It is evident from this paſſage, that Deſtiny was ſuperior to the power of the Gods: otherwiſe *Minerva* ſpeaks as blaſphemouſly as *Telemachus*: For what difference is there between ſaying, that the Gods cannot preſerve even thoſe they love from death, and ſaying that the Gods could not ſave *Ulyſſes*? Why therefore may not the words of *Telemachus* be thought to have a reſpect to Deſtiny?

I am of opinion, that the Poet had ſomething further in view by putting theſe words into the mouth of *Minerva*: The words of *Telemachus*, if taken groſly, might appear ſhocking to ſo pious a perſon as *Neſtor*, and make an ill impreſſion upon him to the diſadvantage of *Telemachus*; *Minerva* therefore artfully explains it, and ſoftens the horrour of it by reconciling it to the Theology of thoſe ages.

For

For he no more muſt draw his country's breath,
Already ſnatch'd by Fate, and the black doom of death!
Paſs we to other ſubjects; and engage
On themes remote the venerable Sage:
(Who thrice has ſeen the periſhable kind
Of men decay, and thro' three ages ſhin'd,
Like Gods majeſtic, and like Gods in mind.)
For much he knows, and juſt concluſions draws
From various precedents, and various laws.

V. 301. *Paſs we to other ſubjects.* ———] *Telemachus* here puts ſeveral queſtions, as it were in a breath, to *Neſtor*; and *Plutarch* obſerves upon this paſſage, that he who enquires any thing of an old man, though the old man himſelf has no concern in the ſtory, wins his heart at once; and incites a perſon, who is upon all occaſions very willing to diſcourſe. He introduces this as an inſtance of the art *Telemachus* uſes, in adapting himſelf by his queſtions to the temper of the perſon with whom he converſes: He puts together, continues he, ſeveral queſtions upon ſeveral ſubjects, which is more judicious than to confine his anſwer to a ſingle interrogatory, and by that method deprive *Neſtor* of one of the moſt pleaſant enjoyments of old age, I mean the pleaſure of talking. *Plutarch. Sympoſiac.*

V. 303. *Who thrice had ſeen the periſhable kind*
Of men decay, ———

The Poet here tells us that *Neſtor* was now in his fourth generation: *Ovid* took the word γένεα to ſignify an hundred years; but then *Neſtor* muſt have been above three hundred years old. Others with more probability underſtand it to ſignify a generation, or ſuch a portion of time in which any race of men flouriſh together, which is computed to be about thirty years. I refer the Reader to the Note upon the 33d verſe of the firſt book of the *Iliad*, for the particular age of *Neſtor*. According to that computation, he muſt now be about ninety-five years of age.

O ſon

O ſon of *Neleus!* awful *Neſtor*, tell
How he, the mighty *Agamemnon* fell?
By what ſtrange fraud *Ægyſthus* wrought, relate,
(By force he could not) ſuch a Heroe's fate?
Liv'd *Menelaus* not in *Greece!* or where
Was then the martial brother's pious care?
Condemn'd perhaps ſome foreign ſhore to tread;
Or ſure *Ægyſthus* had not dar'd the deed.

To whom the Full of Days. Illuſtrious youth,
Attend (tho' partly thou haſt gueſt) the truth.
For had the martial *Menelaus* found
The ruffian breathing yet on *Argive* ground;
Nor earth had hid his carcaſe from the ſkies,
Nor *Grecian* virgins ſhriek'd his obſequies,
But fowls obſcene diſmember'd his remains,
And dogs had torn him on the naked plains.
While us the works of bloody *Mars* employ'd,
The wanton youth inglorious peace enjoy'd;
He, ſtretch'd at eaſe in *Argos'* calm receſs,
(Whoſe ſtately ſteeds luxuriant paſtures bleſs)

V. 309. *How he, the mighty* Agamemnon *fell.*] *Telemachus* does not aſk this queſtion out of curioſity, but with great judgment; he knows there were deſigns againſt his life, as well as there had been againſt *Agamemnon*; he therefore aſks it, that he may learn how to defeat them; chiefly to inſtruct himſelf how beſt to aſſiſt his father upon his return, by aiding him in eſcaping the ſnares of the Suitors. *Dacier.*

With

With flattery's inſinuating art
Sooth'd the frail Queen, and poiſon'd all her heart.
At firſt with worthy ſhame and decent pride,
The royal dame his lawleſs ſuit deny'd.
For Virtue's image yet poſſeſt her mind,
Taught by a Maſter of the tuneful kind:
Atrides, parting for the *Trojan* war,
Conſign'd the youthful conſort to his care;
True to his charge, the Bard preſerv'd her long
In honour's limits (ſuch the pow'r of Song)

V. 333. *Taught by a Maſter of the tuneful kind.*] *Homer* through the whole *Odyſſey* ſpeaks much in honour of the Art which he himſelf loved, and in which he ſo eminently excelled: From theſe and other paſſages we may learn the ſtate of Poetry in thoſe ages: "Poets "(ſays *Euſtathius*) were ranked in the claſs of Philoſophers; and "the Antients made uſe of them as Præceptors in Muſic and Mo-"rality." *Strabo* quotes this very paſſage as an inſtance of the excellence of Poetry in forming the ſoul to worthy actions: *Ægyſthus* could not debauch *Clytemneſtra*, 'till he baniſhed the Poet who was her guide and inſtructor.

Various are the conjectures of the Antients about the name of the Bard here celebrated: Some, ſays *Euſtathius*, tell us, it was *Chariades*, ſome *Demodocus*, ſome *Glaucus*, &c. but I paſs them over, becauſe they are conjectures.

There were many degrees of theſe ἀοιδοὶ; ſome were ἀοιδοὶ θείων, others ἀοιδοὶ περὶ γάμους: But ſuch Bards as are here mentioned were of an higher ſtation, and retained as inſtructors by Kings and Princes.

I cannot omit one remark of *Euſtathius*: he tells us, that ſome perſons write that theſe ἀοιδοὶ had there names from hence, ὡς ἀιδοῖα μὲν ἔχοντες; exactly reſembling the modern *Italian* ſingers: Madam *Dacier* is not to be forgiven for paſſing over a remark of ſuch importance; if this be true, it makes a great difference between the antient and modern Poets, and is the only advantage I know we have over them.

But

But when the Gods theſe objects of their hate
Dragg'd to deſtruction, by the links of fate;
The bard they baniſh'd from his native ſoil,
And left all helpleſs in a deſert iſle:
There he, the ſweeteſt of the ſacred train,
Sung dying to the rocks, but ſung in vain.
Then Virtue was no more (her guard away)
She fell, to luſt a voluntary prey.
Ev'n to the temple ſtalk'd th' adult'rous ſpouſe,
With impious thanks, and mockery of vows,
With images, with garments, and with gold,
And od'rous fumes from loaded altars roll'd.
Mean-time from flaming *Troy* we cut the way,
With *Menelaus*, thro' the curling ſea.

V. 344. *Then Virtue was no more (her guard away)*
She fell, ——&c.

There is a fine moral couched in the ſtory of the Bard and *Clytemneſtra*; it admirably paints the advantage we draw from wiſe companions for the improvement of our Virtues: *Clytemneſtra* was chaſte becauſe her inſtructor was wiſe: His wiſdom was an inſuperable guard to her modeſty. It was long before ſhe yielded; virtue and honour had a long conteſt, but ſhe no ſooner yielded to adultery, but ſhe aſſiſted in the murder of her huſband; from whence we may draw another moral, that one vice betrays us into another: and when once the fences of honour are thrown down, we become a prey to every paſſion. *Dacier.*

V. 346. *Ev'n to the temple ſtalk'd th' adult'rous ſpouſe.*] Here is a ſurpriſing mixture of religion and impiety: *Ægyſthus*, upon the accompliſhment of ſo great a crime as adultery, returns thanks to the Gods by oblations, as if they had aſſiſted him in the execution of it. *Neſtor* dwells upon it at large, to ſhew that *Ægyſthus* greatly aggravated his guilt by ſuch a piece of impious devotion. *Dacier.*

But when to *Sunium*'s ſacred point we came,
Crown'd with the temple of th' *Athenian* dame;
Atrides' pilot, *Phrontes*, there expir'd;
(*Phrontes*, of all the ſons of men admir'd
To ſteer the bounding bark with ſteady toil,
When the ſtorm thickens, and the billows boil)
While yet he exercis'd the ſteerman's art,
Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart;
Ev'n with the rudder in his hand, he fell.
To pay whoſe honours to the ſhades of hell,
We check'd our haſte, by pious office bound,
And laid our old companion in the ground.
And now the rites diſcharg'd, our courſe we keep
Far on the gloomy boſom of the deep:
Soon as *Malæa*'s miſty tops ariſe,
Sudden the thund'rer blackens all the ſkies,

V. 359. Apollo *touch'd him with his gentle dart.*] *Homer* calls the darts of *Apollo* ἀγανὰ, or gentle; to ſignify that thoſe who die thus ſuddenly, die without pain. *Euſtathius.*

Dacier complains that ſome Critics think *Homer* worthy of blame for enlarging upon ſo mean a perſon as a pilot. It is a ſufficient anſwer to obſerve, that arts were in high eſteem in thoſe times, and men that were eminent in them were in great honour. Neither were arts then confined as in theſe ages to mean perſonages: no leſs a perſon than *Ulyſſes* builds a veſſel in the ſequel of the *Odyſſey*; ſo that this is a falſe piece of delicacy. If *Homer* be culpable, ſo is *Virgil*; he gives the genealogy of *Palinurus*, as well as *Homer* of *Phrontes*. *Virgil*'s deſcription is cenſured as too long, *Homer* concludes his in ſeven lines; and laſtly, *Virgil*'s Epiſode has been judged by the Critics to be an unneceſſary ornament, and to contribute nothing to the Poem; *Homer* relates the death of *Phrontes*, to introduce the diſperſion of the fleet of *Menelaus*; the fleet might well be ſcattered, when it wanted ſo excellent a pilot.

And

And the winds whiſtle, and the ſurges roll
Mountains on mountains, and obſcure the pole.
The tempeſt ſcatters, and divides our fleet;
Part, the ſtorm urges on the coaſt of *Crete*,
Where winding round the rich *Cydonian* plain,
The ſtreams of *Jardan* iſſue to the main.
There ſtands a rock, high eminent and ſteep,
Whoſe ſhaggy brow o'erhangs the ſhady deep,
And views *Gortyna* on the weſtern ſide;
On this rough *Auſter* drove th' impetuous tide:
With broken force the billows rowl'd away,
And heav'd the fleet into the neighb'ring bay,
Thus ſav'd from death they gain'd the *Phæſtan* ſhores,
With ſhatter'd veſſels, and diſabled oars:
But five tall barks the winds and waters toſt
Far from their fellows, on th' *Ægyptian* coaſt.

V. 371. *Part, the ſtorm urges on the coaſt of* Crete.] *Homer* does not amuſe us by relating what became of theſe companions of *Menelaus*; he omits this judiciouſly, and follows the thread of his ſtory: *Menelaus* is the perſon whom the Poet has in view; he therefore paſſes over the ſtory of his companions, to carry on the fable of the Poem by leading us directly to *Menelaus*.

V. 383. ——— *On th' Ægyptian coaſt.*] In the original it is, *The wind and water carry'd them to* Ægyptus. *Homer* by *Ægyptus* means the river *Nile*, and then it is always uſed in the maſculine gender; the region about it took its name from the river *Ægyptus*, this is always uſed in the feminine gender; but the country had not received that name in the days of *Homer*. *Euſtathius*.

What *Dacier* adds to this obſervation, may aſſiſt in determining the diſpute concerning the priority of *Homer* and *Heſiod*: *Heſiod* makes mention of the river *Nilus*; if therefore it be true that *Ægyptus* had not been called by the name of *Nilus* in the times of *Homer*, it is a demonſtration that *Heſiod* was poſterior to *Homer*; otherwiſe he could not have been acquainted with any other name but that of *Ægyptus*.

There wander'd *Menelaus* thro' foreign ſhores,
Amaſſing gold, and gath'ring naval ſtores;
While curſt *Ægyſthus* the deteſted deed
By fraud fulfill'd, and his great brother bled.
Sev'n years, the traytor rich *Mycenæ* ſway'd,
And his ſtern rule the groaning land obey'd;
The eighth, from *Athens* to his realm reſtor'd,
Oreſtes brandiſh'd the revenging ſword,
Slew the dire pair, and gave to fun'ral flame
The vile aſſaſſin, and adult'rous dame.
That day, ere yet the bloody triumphs ceaſe,
Return'd *Atrides* to the coaſt of *Greece*,
And ſafe to *Argos*' port his navy brought,
With gifts of price and pond'rous treaſure fraught.
Hence warn'd, my ſon beware! nor idly ſtand
Too long a ſtranger to thy native land;
Leſt heedleſs abſence wear thy wealth away,
While lawleſs feaſters in thy palace ſway;
Perhaps may ſeize thy realm, and ſhare the ſpoil;
And thou return, with diſappointed toil,
From thy vain journey, to a rifled Iſle.

V. 390. *From* Athens *to his realm* ———.] There is a different reading in this place; inſtead of ἀπ' Ἀθηνάων, ſome write ἀπὸ Φωκήων; for *Oreſtes* was educated by *Strophius* King of *Phocis*, and father of *Pylades*: The Ancients reconcile the difference, by ſaying that *Oreſtes* might be ſent from *Phocis* to *Athens* for his education, and returning thence to his own country, might revenge the death of his father *Agamemnon*; ſo that although he was firſt bred up in *Phocis*, he was afterwards a ſojourner in *Athens*. *Euſtathius*.

Howe'er

Howe'er, my friend, indulge one labour more,
And ſeek *Atrides* on the *Spartan* ſhore.
He, wand'ring long, a wider circle made,
And many-languag'd nations has ſurvey'd;
And meaſur'd tracts unknown to other ſhips,
Amid the monſtrous wonders of the deeps;
(A length of Ocean and unbounded ſky,
Which ſcarce the Sea-fowl in a year o'erfly)
Go then; to *Sparta* take the watry way,
Thy ſhip and ſailors but for orders ſtay;
Or if by land thou chuſe thy courſe to bend,
My ſteeds, my chariots, and my ſons attend:

V. 411. *A length of Ocean and unbounded ſky,*
Which ſcarce the ſea-fowl in a year o'erfly.]

It muſt be confeſt, that *Neſtor* greatly exaggerates this deſcription: *Homer* himſelf tells us, that a ſhip may ſail in five days from *Crete* to *Ægypt*; wherefore then this Hyperbole of *Neſtor*? It might perhaps be to deter *Telemachus* from a deſign of ſailing to *Crete*, and he through his inexperience might believe the deſcription. It may be added, that what *Neſtor* ſpeaks concerning the flight of birds, may be only ſaid to ſhew the great diſtance of that ſea: Nay, by a favourable interpretation it may be reconciled to truth; the meaning then muſt be this: Should a perſon obſerve that ſea a whole year, he would not ſee one bird flying over it, both becauſe of the vaſtneſs and dreadfulneſs of it; and perhaps the whole of this might ariſe from the obſervation, that this ſea is not frequented by birds. This is wholly and almoſt literally taken from *Euſtathius*; and if we add to this the ignorance of the ſea and ſea-affairs in thoſe ages, we ſhall the leſs wonder to hear ſo wiſe a man as *Neſtor* deſcribing it with ſo much terror. Navigation is now greatly improved, and the moderns ſail further in a month, than the Ancients could in a year; their whole art conſiſting chiefly in coaſting along the ſhores, and conſequently they made but little way.

Thee to *Atrides* they ſhall ſafe convey,
Guides of thy road, companions of thy way.
Urge him with truth to frame his free replies,
And ſure he will: For *Menelaus* is wiſe.
Thus while he ſpeaks, the ruddy ſun deſcends,
And twilight grey her ev'ning ſhade extends.
Then thus the blue-ey'd Maid: O full of days!
Wiſe are thy words, and juſt are all thy ways.
Now immolate the Tongues, and mix the wine,
Sacred to *Neptune* and the pow'rs divine.
The lamp of day is quench'd beneath the deep,
And ſoft approach the balmy hours of ſleep:
Nor fits it to prolong the heav'nly feaſt,
Timeleſs, indecent, but retire to reſt.

So

V. 425. *Now immolate the tongues———*] Various are the reaſons which *Euſtathius* reports concerning this oblation of the tongues at the concluſion of the ſacrifice. It was to purge themſelves from any evil words they might have uttered; or becauſe the tongue was reckoned the beſt part of the ſacrifice, and ſo reſerved for the completion of it; or they offered the tongue to the Gods, as witneſſes to what they had ſpoken. I omit the reſt as ſuperfluous. They had a cuſtom of offering the tongues to *Mercury*, becauſe they believed him the giver of Eloquence. *Dacier* expatiates upon this cuſtom. The people, ſays ſhe, might fear, leſt through wine and the joy of the feſtival, they might have uttered ſome words unbecoming the ſanctity of the occaſion: by this ſacrifice of the tongues, they ſignified that they purged away whatever they had ſpoken amiſs during the feſtival; and aſked in particular pardon of *Mercury*, who preſided over diſcourſe, to the end they might not carry home any uncleanneſs which might ſtop the bleſſings expected from the ſacrifice.

V. 429. *Nor fits it to prolong the heav'nly feaſt,*
Timeleſs, indecent, &c.]

Euſtathius ſhews the difference between ἑορταὶ, feſtivals, and θυσιαὶ, or ſacrifices: in the former it was cuſtomary to ſpend the whole night in

So ſpake *Jove*'s daughter, the celeſtial maid.
The ſober train attended and obey'd.
The ſacred heralds on their hands around
Pour'd the full urns; the youths the goblets crown'd:
From bowl to bowl the holy bev'rage flows;
While to the final ſacrifice they roſe.
The tongues they caſt upon the fragrant flame,
And pour, above, the conſecrated ſtream.
And now, their thirſt by copious draughts allay'd,
The youthful Hero and th' *Athenian* maid
Propoſe departure from the finiſh'd rite,
And in their hollow bark to paſs the night:
But this the hoſpitable Sage deny'd.
Forbid it, *Jove!* and all the Gods! he cry'd,
Thus from my walls the much-lov'd ſon to ſend
Of ſuch a hero, and of ſuch a friend!
Me, as ſome needy peaſant, would ye leave,
Whom heav'n denies the bleſſing to relieve?

in wine and rejoicing: in the latter, this was reckoned an unlawful cuſtom, through the fear of falling into any indecencies through wine. He likewiſe gives another reaſon of this injunction, by telling us that it was the cuſtom to offer ſacrifices to the celeſtial Powers in the day, and even to finiſh them about the ſetting of the ſun; and that thoſe who dealt in incantations performed their ſacrifices to the infernal powers by night, and finiſhed them before ſun-riſing. Either of theſe reaſons ſufficiently explains the words of the Goddeſs; and the former carries in it an excellent moral, that particular care ſhould be taken in our acts of devotion, not to turn religion into impiety.

Me would you leave, who boaſt imperial ſway,
When beds of royal ſtate invite your ſtay?
No —— long as life this mortal ſhall inſpire,
Or as my children imitate their ſire,
Here ſhall the wand'ring ſtranger find his home,
And hoſpitable rites adorn the dome.

Well haſt thou ſpoke (the blue-ey'd maid replies)
Belov'd old man! benevolent, as wiſe.
Be the kind dictates of thy heart obey'd,
And let thy words *Telemachus* perſuade:

V. 450. *When beds of royal ſtate invite your ſtay?*] This paſſage gives us a full inſight into the manners of theſe hoſpitable ages; they not only kept a treaſury for bowls or vaſes of gold or ſilver, to give as ξεινήια, or gifts of hoſpitality, but alſo a wardrobe of various habits and rich furniture, to lodge and beſtow upon ſtrangers. *Euſtathius* relates, that *Tellias* of *Agrigentum* was a perſon of ſo great hoſpitality, that five hundred horſemen coming to his houſe in the winter ſeaſon, he entertained them, and gave every man a cloak and a tunic. This laudable cuſtom prevailed, and ſtill prevails, in the eaſtern countries: it was the practice of *Abraham* of old, and is at this day of the *Turks*, as we may learn from their Caravanſaries, erected for the reception of travellers. And yet *Dacier* obſerves, that a *French* Critic has ſhewed ſo ill a taſte as to ridicule this paſſage. "*Telemachus* (ſays that author) being entertained by *Neſtor*, intimates his intention of returning to lodge on ſhip-board with his companions: but *Neſtor* detains him, by aſking him if he thought he had not quilts or coverlets to give him a Night's lodging: Upon this *Telemachus* goes to bed in a reſounding gallery, and *Neſtor* in a bed which his wife made ready for him." The nobleſt things are moſt liable to burleſque, by perverting their meaning; as ſome pictures, by varying the poſition, repreſent a man or a monſter. He is very ſevere upon the *reſounding gallery*, which in truth means no more than very lofty or elevated, and by conſequence very noble and magnificent.

He

He to thy palace ſhall thy ſteps purſue;
I to the ſhip, to give the orders due,
Preſcribe directions, and confirm the crew.
For I alone ſuſtain their naval cares,
Who boaſt experience from theſe ſilver hairs;
All youths the reſt, whom to this journey move
Like years, like tempers, and their Prince's love.
There in the veſſel ſhall I paſs the night;
And ſoon as morning paints the fields of light,
I go to challenge from the *Caucons* bold,
A debt, contracted in the days of old.
But this thy gueſt, receiv'd with friendly care,
Let thy ſtrong courſers ſwift to *Sparta* bear;

V. 468. *I go to challenge from the* Caucons.] The Poet makes a double uſe of theſe words of the Goddeſs; ſhe gives an air of probability to her excuſe, why ſhe ſhould not be preſſed to ſtay; and at the ſame time *Homer* avoids the abſurdity of introducing that Goddeſs at *Sparta*; *Menelaus* and *Helen* are celebrating the nuptials of their ſon and daughter: *Minerva* is a Virgin Deity, and conſequently an enemy to all nuptial ceremonies. *Euſtathius.*

But it may be neceſſary to obſerve who theſe *Caucons* are: we find in the tenth book the *Caucons* mentioned as auxiliaries to *Troy*: There *Dolon* ſays,

The Carians, Caucons, *the* Pelaſgian *hoſt*,
And Leleges *encamp along the coaſt.*

Are theſe *Caucons* the ſame with thoſe here mentioned? *Euſtathius* informs us, that there was a people of *Triphyly*, between *Elis* and *Pylos*, named *Caucons*: But *Strabo* ſays, that the whole race is now extinct, and that theſe here mentioned are of *Dymæa*, and take their name from the river *Caucon*: whereas thoſe in the *Iliad* are *Paphlagonians*: they were a wandering nation, and conſequently might be the ſame people originally, and retain the ſame name in different countries.

Prepare thy chariot at the dawn of day,
And be thy ſon companion of his way.
Then turning with the word, *Minerva* flies,
And ſoars an Eagle thro' the liquid ſkies.
Viſion divine! the throng'd ſpectators gaze
In holy wonder fixt, and ſtill amaze.
But chief the rev'rend Sage admir'd; he took
The hand of young *Telemachus*, and ſpoke,
Oh happy Youth! and favour'd of the ſkies,
Diſtinguiſh'd care of guardian Deities!

Whoſe

V. 478. *But chief the rev'rend Sage admir'd*———] It may be aſked why *Neſtor* is in ſuch a ſurprize at the diſcovery of the Goddeſs: It is evident from the *Iliad*, that he had been no ſtranger to ſuch intercourſes of the Deities; nay, in this very book *Neſtor* tells us, that *Ulyſſes* enjoyed almoſt the conſtant preſence of *Minerva*; inſomuch that *Sophocles*, the great imitator of *Homer*, relates, that he knew the Goddeſs by her voice, without ſeeing her. *Euſtathius* anſwers, that the wonder of *Neſtor* aroſe not from the diſcovery of that Deity, but that ſhe ſhould accompany ſo young a perſon as *Telemachus*: After her departure, the old man ſtood amazed, and looked upon that Hero as ſome very extraordinary perſon, whom in ſuch early years the Goddeſs of War and Wiſdom had vouchſafed to attend. This interpretation agrees perfectly with what *Neſtor* ſpeaks to *Telemachus*.

V. 481. *Diſtinguiſh'd care of guardian Deities.*] I will take this opportunity to obviate an objection that may be made againſt all interpoſition of the Gods in aſſiſting the Heroes of the *Odyſſey*: It has been thought by ſome Critics a diſparagement to them to ſtand in continual need of ſuch ſupernatural ſuccour: If two perſons were engaged in combat, and a third perſon ſhould immediately ſtep in to the aſſiſtance of one of the parties, and kill the adverſary, would it not reflect upon the valour of his friend who was ſo weak as to want ſuch aſſiſtance? Why, for inſtance, ſhould *Jupiter* help *Æneas* to kill *Turnus*? Was not he brave enough to fight, and ſtrong enough to conquer his enemy by his own proweſs? and would not *Turnus* have killed *Æneas* with the ſame aſſiſtance; It is therefore a diſpa-

ragement

Whoſe early years for future worth engage,
No vulgar manhood, no ignoble age.
For lo! none other of the court above
Than ſhe, the daughter of almighty *Jove*,

ragement to the actors, thus continually to ſupply the defects of a Hero by the power of a Deity.

But this is a falſe way of arguing, and from hence it might be inferred, that the love and favour of a Deity ſerves only to make thoſe whom he aſſiſts, and thoſe who depend upon ſuch aſſiſtance, appear weak, impotent, cowardly, and unworthy to be conquerors. Can any doubt ariſe whether the love and favour of a God be a diſparagement or honour to thoſe whom he favours? According to theſe Critics, we ſhould find the character of a perfect Hero in an impious *Mezentius*, who acknowledges no God but his own arm and his own ſword: It is true, the objection would be juſt, if the Hero himſelf performed nothing of the action; or if when he were almoſt conquered by the ſuperior valour of his enemy, he owed his life and victory to Gods and Miracles: But the hero always behaves himſelf in all his actions, as if he were to gain ſucceſs without the aſſiſtance of the Deity; and the preſence of the Gods is ſo ordered, that we may retrench every thing that is miraculous, without making any alteration in the action or character of the human perſonages. Thus in the inſtance of *Æneas* and *Turnus*, though *Jupiter* favours *Æneas*, yet *Æneas* is painted in ſtronger colours of fortitude, he appears ſuperior, as a man unaſſiſted, and able to conquer *Turnus*; and conſequently the favour of *Jupiter* makes no alteration in the action or character of *Æneas*.

There is likewiſe a wide difference between the aſſiſtance of a Man and of a God: The actions of men belong only to the performers of thoſe actions; but when a Deity aſſiſts us by inſpiring us with ſtrength and courage, the actions we perform are really our own, and the more he favours us, the more glory he gives us: ſo that the aſſiſtance of man eclipſes, but the aſſiſtance of a God exalts, our glory. Thus, for inſtance, when *Achilles* is purſuing *Hector*, he charges the *Greeks* to keep off from *Hector*, their aſſiſtance might leſſen his glory: but when *Pallas* offers her aſſiſtance, he immediately embraces it as an honour, and boaſts of it as ſuch to *Hector*. I have been large upon this objection, becauſe the Reader ought to carry it in his memory through the whole Poem, and apply it to every action, in which any ſhare is aſcribed to any Deity. See *Boſſu* more at large concerning this objection.

Pallas herſelf, the War-triumphant Maid,
Confeſt is thine, as once thy father's aid.
So guide me, Goddeſs! ſo propitious ſhine
On me, my conſort, and my royal line!
A yearling bullock to thy name ſhall ſmoke,
Untam'd, unconſcious of the galling yoke.
With ample forehead, and yet tender horns,
Whoſe budding honours ductile gold adorns.
Submiſſive thus the hoary Sire preferr'd
His holy vow: the fav'ring Goddeſs heard.
Then ſlowly riſing, o'er the ſandy ſpace
Precedes the father, follow'd by his race,
(A long proceſſion) timely marching home
In comely order to the regal dome.
There when arriv'd, on thrones around him plac'd,
His ſons and grandſons the wide circle grac'd.
To theſe the hoſpitable Sage, in ſign
Of ſocial welcome, mix'd the racy wine,
(Late from the mellowing caſk reſtor'd to light,
By ten long years refin'd, and roſy-bright.)
To *Pallas* high the foaming bowl he crown'd,
And ſprinkled large Libation on the ground.
Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
And to the gifts of balmy ſleep repairs.
Deep in a rich Alcove the Prince was laid,
And ſlept beneath the pompous Colonnade;

Faſt

Faſt by his ſide *Piſiſtratus* lay ſpread,
(In age his equal) on a ſplendid bed:
But in an inner court, ſecurely clos'd,
The rev'rend *Neſtor* with his Queen repos'd.
When now *Aurora*, daughter of the dawn,
With roſy luſtre purpled o'er the lawn;
The old man early roſe, walk'd forth, and ſate
On poliſh'd ſtone before his Palace gate:
With unguents ſmooth the lucid marble ſhone,
Where ancient *Neleus* ſat, a ruſtic throne;
But he deſcending to th' infernal ſhade,
Sage *Neſtor* fill'd it, and the ſceptre ſway'd.
His ſons around him mild obeyſance pay,
And duteous take the orders of the day.

V. 518. *And ſate On poliſh'd ſtone before his palace gate.*] We have here an ancient cuſtom recorded by the Poet; a King places himſelf before the gate of his Palace upon a ſeat of marble, worn ſmooth by long uſe, ſays *Euſtathius*, or perhaps ſmoothed exquiſitely by the hand of the workmen. What I would chiefly obſerve is, that they placed themſelves thus in public for the diſpatch of juſtice: We read in the ſcripture of Judges *ſitting in the gate*; and that this procedure of *Neſtor* was for that purpoſe, is probable from the expreſſion, *He ſat in the ſeat where* Neleus [μήστωρ, or *Conſiliarius*,] *uſed to ſit*, (which ſeems to expreſs his wiſdom in the diſcharge of juſtice.) *Neſtor* is alſo deſcribed as bearing his ſceptre in his hand, which was never uſed but upon ſome act of regality, in the diſpatch of juſtice, or other ſolemn occaſions. Perhaps, ſays *Dacier*, theſe ſeats or thrones might be conſecrated with oil, to draw a reverence to the ſeats of juſtice as by an act of religion; but I rather judge (adds ſhe) that no more is meant than to expreſs the ſhining of theſe thrones, they being undoubtedly made of marble.

Firſt *Echephron* and *Stratius* quit their bed;
Then *Perſeus*, *Aretus*, and *Thraſymed*;
The laſt *Piſiſtratus* aroſe from reſt:
They came, and near him plac'd the ſtranger gueſt.
To theſe the Senior thus declar'd his will:
My ſons! the dictates of your Sire fulfil.
To *Pallas*, firſt of Gods, prepare the feaſt,
Who grac'd our rites, a more than mortal gueſt.
Let one, diſpatchful, bid ſome ſwain to lead
A well-fed bullock from the graſſy mead;
One ſeek the harbour where the veſſels moor,
And bring thy friends, *Telemachus!* aſhore,
(Leave only two the gally to attend)
Another to *Laerceus* muſt we ſend,
Artiſt divine, whoſe ſkilful hands infold
The victim's horn with circumfuſile gold.

The

V. 528. Piſiſtratus.] Would I indulge my fancy in a conjecture, I might ſuppoſe that the famous tyrant *Piſiſtratus* was deſcended, or borrowed his name from this ſon of *Neſtor*. *Herodotus* informs us, as *Euſtathius* obſerves, that all the *Piſiſtrati* were originally *Pylians*. If this be true, we have a very ſtrong evidence that *Homer* is not all fiction, but that he celebrates the great men of thoſe ages with reality, and only embelliſhes the true ſtory with the ornaments of Poetry.

V. 540. Laerceus——*Artiſt divine, &c.*] The Author of the *Parallel* quotes this paſſage to prove that *Homer* was ignorant of the Mechanic arts: We have here, ſays he, a Gilder with his anvil and hammer; but what occaſion has he for an anvil and hammer in the art of a Gilder? *Boileau* has excellently vindicated *Homer* from this objection, in his reflections upon *Longinus*; this Gilder was a Gold-beater: *Neſtor*, we ſee, furniſhed the gold, and he beat it into leaves, ſo

The reſt may here the pious duty ſhare,
And bid the handmaids for the feaſt prepare,
The ſeats to range, the fragrant wood to bring,
And limpid waters from the living ſpring.
He ſaid, and buſy each his care beſtow'd;
Already at the gates the bullock low'd,
Already came the *Ithacenſian* crew,
The dextrous ſmith the tools already drew:
His pond'rous hammer, and his anvil ſound,
And the ſtrong tongs to turn the metal round.
Nor was *Minerva* abſent from the rite,
She view'd her honours, and enjoy'd the fight.

With

ſo that he had occaſion to make uſe of his anvil and hammer; the anvil was portable, becauſe the work was not laborious. Our modern travellers aſſure us, that it is at this day the practice in the eaſtern regions, as in *Perſia*, &c. for the artiſts in metals to carry about with them the whole implements of trade, to the houſe of the perſons where they find imployment; it is therefore a full vindication of *Homer*, to obſerve that the gold this artiſt uſed in gilding, was nothing but gold beat into fine leaves.

V. 552. *Nor was* Minerva *abſent* ——] It may be aſked in what ſenſe *Minerva* can be ſaid to come to the ſacrifice? *Euſtathius* anſwers, that the Ancients finding the inclinations of men to be bent incontinently upon pleaſures, to oblige them to uſe them moderately, diſtinguiſhed times, ordained ſacrifices, and repreſenting the Gods in the forms of men, brought them to uſe thoſe pleaſures with diſcretion; they taught them that the Gods came down to their libations and ſacrifices, to induce them to govern their converſation with reverence and modeſty: Thus *Jupiter* and the other Gods in the *Iliads*, and *Neptune* in the *Odyſſey*, are ſaid to feaſt with the *Æthiopians*.

If I might be pardoned a conjecture, I would ſuppoſe, that *Minerva* may in another ſenſe be ſaid to come to the ſacrifice; I mean by her image or ſtatue: and what may ſeem to confirm this opinion, is what *Diodorus* relates in his third book concerning the abovementioned *Æthiopians*; they carried about the ſtatues of *Jupiter* and the other

With rev'rent hand the King preſents the gold,
Which round th' intorted horns the gilder roll'd;
So wrought, as *Pallas* might with pride behold.
Young *Aretus* from forth his bridal bow'r
Brought the full laver, o'er their hands to pour,
And caniſters of conſecrated flour.
Stratius and *Echephron* the victim led;
The ax was held by warlike *Thraſymed*,
In act to ſtrike: Before him *Perſeus* ſtood,
The vaſe extending to receive the blood.
The King himſelf initiates to the Pow'r;
Scatters with quiv'ring hand the ſacred flour,

other Gods twelve days, during which time the Gods were ſaid to be gone to the *Æthiopians*: and if the Gods may be ſaid to come to the *Æthiopians* by their ſtatues, why may not the ſame be ſaid of *Minerva*, from the introduction of her ſtatue among the *Pylians*? So that the appearance of the Goddeſs may poſſibly mean the appearance of her ſtatue.

V. 560. Stratius *and* Echephron, &c.] *Neſtor* here makes uſe only of the miniſtry of his ſons; the reaſon of it is, becauſe it was reckoned honourable to ſerve in the performance of ſacrifice, this being in ſome ſenſe an attending upon the Gods: or becauſe it was the practice of thoſe ages for great perſons to do thoſe offices with their own hands, which in the latter have been performed by ſervants.

Euſtathius reports a ſaying of *Antigonus*, who obſerving his ſon behaving himſelf imperiouſly to his ſubjects, "Know'ſt thou not, "ſays he, that Royalty itſelf is but illuſtrious ſervitude!" an intimation that he himſelf was but a ſervant of the public, and therefore ſhould uſe his ſervants with moderation.

But the true reaſon of *Neſtor*'s aſſiſting in the ſacrifice is, becauſe Kings anciently had the inſpection of religion, and Prieſthood was joined to Royalty, according to that of *Virgil*,

Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phœbique ſacerdos.

And the ſtream ſprinkles: From the curling brows
The hair collected in the fire he throws.
Soon as due vows on ev'ry part were pay'd,
And ſacred wheat upon the victim lay'd,
Strong *Thraſymed* diſcharg'd the ſpeeding blow
Full on his neck, and cut the nerves in two.
Down ſunk the heavy beaſt: the females round,
Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a ſhrilling ſound.
Nor ſcorn'd the Queen the holy choir to join,
(The firſt-born ſhe, of old *Clymenus'* line;
In youth by *Neſtor* lov'd, of ſpotleſs fame,
And lov'd in age, *Eurydice* her name).

V. 573. *Maids, wives, and matrons mix a ſhrilling ſound.*] I have kept the meaning of the word in the original, which ſignifies prayers made with loud cries, ὀλόλυξαν. ὀλολύγη, ſays *Heſychius*, is, φωνὴ γυναικῶν ἣν ποιοῦνται ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐχόμεναι, *the voice of women, which they make at ſacrifices in their prayers.* But there is ſtill ſomething in it more to the preſent purpoſe; the Scholiaſt upon *Æſchylus* remarks that this word is not uſed properly but when applied to the prayers offered to *Minerva*, for *Minerva* is the only Goddeſs to whom prayers are made with loud cries, ſhe being the Goddeſs of War; to other Deities they offer prayer with thankſgiving; οὐ γὰρ μόνῃ τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ δαίμονι ἔστι πολεμικῇ ὀλολίζουσι, τοῖς δ' ἄλλοις Θεοῖς παιωνίζουσι.

Thus alſo in the ſixth book of the *Iliads*, verſe 301.

Αἱ δ' ὀλολυγῇ πᾶσαι Ἀθήνῃ χεῖρας ἄνεσχον.

They fill the dome with ſupplicating cries.

And in the preſent paſſage in the *Odyſſey*,

——— αἱ δ' ὀλόλυξαν
Θυγατέρες τε, νυοί τε, &c. *Dacier.*

From

From earth they rear him, ſtruggling now with death;
And *Neſtor*'s Youngeſt ſtops the vents of breath.
The ſoul for ever flies: on all ſides round
Streams the black blood, and ſmokes upon the ground.
The beaſt they then divide, and diſ-unite
The ribs and limbs, obſervant of the rite:
On theſe, in double cawls involv'd with art,
The choiceſt morſels lay from ev'ry part.
The ſacred Sage before his altar ſtands,
Turns the burnt-off'ring with his holy hands,
And pours the wine, and bids the flames aſpire:
The youth with inſtruments ſurround the fire.
The thighs now ſacrific'd, and entrails dreſt,
Th' aſſiſtants part, transfix, and broil the reſt.
While theſe officious tend the rites divine,
The laſt fair branch of the *Neſtorean* line,
Sweet *Polycaſte*, took the pleaſing toil
To bathe the Prince, and pour the fragrant oil.

O'er

V. 594. *Sweet* Polycaſte *took the pleaſing toil*
To bathe the Prince, &c.]

It is very neceſſary to ſay ſomething about this practice of women bathing and anointing men; it frequently occurs through the whole *Odyſſey*, and is ſo contrary to the uſage of the Moderns, as to give offence to modeſty; neither is this done by women of inferior quality, but we have here a young Princeſs, bathing, anointing, and cloathing the naked *Telemachus*. *Euſtathius* indeed tells us, it was undoubtedly by her father's command: but if it was a piece of immodeſty, it does not ſolve the objection, whoever commanded it. I confeſs it would be immodeſt in theſe ages of the world, and the only

O'er his fair limbs a flow'ry veſt he threw,
And iſſu'd, like a God, to mortal view.
His former ſeat beſide the King he found,
(His people's father with his Peers around)
All plac'd at eaſe the holy banquet join,
And in the dazling goblet laughs the wine.
The rage of thirſt and hunger now ſuppreſt,
The Monarch turns him to his royal gueſt;
And for the promis'd journey bids prepare
The ſmooth-hair'd horſes, and the rapid car,
Obſervant of his word. The word ſcarce ſpoke,
The ſons obey, and join them to the yoke.
Then bread and wine a ready handmaid brings,
And preſents, ſuch as ſuit the ſtate of Kings.
The glitt'ring ſeat *Telemachus* aſcends;
His faithful guide *Piſiſtratus* attends;

With

only excuſe that occurs to me is, to ſay that Cuſtom eſtabliſhed it. It is in manners, in ſome degree, as in dreſs; if a faſhion never ſo indecent prevails, yet no perſon is ridiculous, becauſe it is faſhionable: ſo in manners, if a practice prevails univerſally, though not reconcilable to real modeſty, yet no perſon can be ſaid to be immodeſt who comes into it, becauſe it is agreeable to the cuſtom of the times and countries.

V. 610, &c. *The concluſion of the book.*] I ſhall lay together what I have further to obſerve on the concluſion of this book: It is remarkable, that the Poet does not amuſe himſelf in deſcribing the preſent he received from *Neſtor*, or the proviſions for the journey, or even the journey itſelf at large; he diſpatches the whole in a few lines very judiciouſly; he carries his Hero directly to *Menelaus*, who is to furniſh many incidents that contribute to the deſign of the Poem, and paſſes over other matters as unneceſſary.

We

With haſty hand the ruling reins he drew:
He laſh'd the courſers, and the courſers flew.
Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
Their equal pace, and ſmoak'd along the field.
The tow'rs of *Pylos* ſink, its views decay,
Fields after fields fly back, till cloſe of day:
Then ſunk the Sun, and darken'd all the way.
To *Pheræ* now, *Diocleus'* ſtately ſeat,
(Of *Alpheus'* race) the weary youths retreat.
His houſe affords the hoſpitable rite,
And pleas'd they ſleep (the bleſſing of the night).

We have likewiſe a piece of poetical Geography, and learn that it is exactly two days journey from *Pyle* to *Lacedæmon*.

This book takes up three days; the firſt is ſpent in the inquiries *Telemachus* makes of *Neſtor* concerning *Ulyſſes*; the two laſt in the morning ſacrifice at *Pylos*, and in the journey of *Telemachus* to *Lacedæmon*; ſo that five days have now paſſed ſince the opening of the Poem. I have ſaid nothing about the ſacrifice, though it be the moſt exact deſcription of the ſacrifices, as practiſed by the Ancients, perhaps extant in any Author; I refer to the obſervations upon the firſt book of the *Iliad*.

I would here remark that the three firſt books are written with the utmoſt ſimplicity, there has been no room for ſuch exalted ſtrokes of Poetry as are to be found in the *Iliad*, or in the future parts of the *Odyſſey*: But this is not owing to the decay of genius in *Homer*, as ſome Critics have affirmed, (who look upon the *Odyſſey* as bearing marks of his declining years) but to the nature of the ſubject. The characters of *Achilles* and *Ulyſſes* are both very great, but very different. The *Iliad* conſiſts of battles and a continual commotion; the *Odyſſey* in Patience and Wiſdom: and conſequently the ſtyle of the two Poems muſt be as different as the characters of the two Heroes. A noble fountain of Poetry opens in the next book, and flows with an uninterrupted courſe almoſt through the whole *Odyſſey*.

But

But when *Aurora*, daughter of the dawn,
With roſy luſtre purpled o'er the lawn;
Again they mount, their journey to renew,
And from the ſounding portico they flew.
Along the waving fields their way they hold,
The fields receding as the chariot roll'd:
Then ſlowly ſunk the ruddy globe of light,
And o'er the ſhaded landſcape ruſh'd the night.

THE

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

The ARGUMENT.

The Conference with *Menelaus*.

Telemachus *with* Piſiſtratus *arriving at* Sparta, *is hoſpitably received by* Menelaus, *to whom he relates the cauſe of his coming, and learns from him many particulars of what befel the* Greeks *ſince the deſtruction of* Troy. *He dwells more at large upon the Prophecies of* Proteus *to him in his return, from which he acquaints* Telemachus, *that* Ulyſſes *is detained in the Iſland of* Calypſo.

In the mean time the Suitors conſult to deſtroy Telemachus *in his voyage home.* Penelope *is apprized of this, but comforted in a dream by* Pallas, *in the ſhape of her ſiſter* Ipthima.

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Telemachus *is receiv'd at* Lacedemon *in ye Palace of* Menelaus *with* Pisistratus.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

AND now proud *Sparta* with their wheels refounds,
Sparta whose walls a range of hills surrounds:
At the fair dome the rapid labour ends;
Where sat *Atrides* 'midst his bridal friends,

Ariſtotle in his Poetics reports, that certain ancient Critics reproached *Homer* for an indecency in making *Telemachus* take his abode with *Menelaus*, and not with his own grandfather *Icarius*: this Monſieur *Dacier* ſufficiently anſwers, by ſhewing that *Icarius* had ſettled himſelf in *Acarnania*, and not in *Lacedæmon*.

With

With double vows invoking *Hymen*'s pow'r,
To bleſs his ſons and daughters nuptial hour.

That

V. 5. ——— *invoking* Hymen's *pow'r.*] *Athenæus* has been very ſevere upon this paſſage, as *Euſtathius* obſerves, and *Dacier* from *Euſtathius*.

Ariſtarchus, ſays *Athenæus*, miſguides us, the words τὸν δ' εὗρον δαινύντα led him into an error; whereas the marriage is compleated, the wedded couple gone away from *Menelaus*, and he and *Helen* at *Lacedæmon*. The five verſes, continues he, (the fifteenth to the twentieth incluſively) are taken from the eighteenth book of the *Iliads*, and inſerted very improperly in this place by *Ariſtarchus*. *Athenæus* gives ſeveral reaſons for his opinion, as that muſic and dancing were very contrary to the ſevere manners of the *Lacedæmonians*; beſides the dance was a *Cretan* dance, how then could it be practiſed among the *Spartans*? The Poet mentions neither the name of the Bard, nor one word of the ſubject of the ſongs: neither can the words μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες be applied at all to the Dancers, but to the Muſicians; and laſtly, it is not to be imagined that *Telemachus* and *Piſiſtratus* ſhould be ſo unpolite, as not to be at all affected with the muſic, had there been any, and yet break out into ſuch wonder at the ſight of the beauty of the Palace of *Menelaus*. *Ariſtarchus*, adds he, thought the deſcription of the wedding of the ſon and daughter of a King was too meanly and conciſely deſcribed, and therefore made this addition.

But it is eaſy to refute *Athenæus*, and vindicate *Ariſtarchus*. *Athenæus* underſtood πέμπε and ἤγετο in the wrong tenſe, they are of the imperfect, *he was ſending*, or *about to ſend*, and not *had ſent*, &c. If the marriage had been abſolutely finiſhed, why ſhould *Minerva* abſent herſelf from *Menelaus*, when the celebration of the nuptials is the only reaſon of the abſence of that Goddeſs? and as for muſic and dancing being contrary to the ſevere manners of the *Lacedæmonians*, this is all conjecture: *Menelaus* lived more than three hundred years before *Lycurgus*; and becauſe ſuch diverſions were forbid in *Sparta* in the days of *Lycurgus*, muſt it follow that they were not uſed in thoſe of *Menelaus*? And ſhould it be granted that muſic and dancing were not uſed in his times, might he not relax a little from the ſeverity of his times, upon ſuch an occaſion of joy as the marriage of a ſon and daughter? I am ſure theſe diverſions are not more contrary to the ſeverity of the *Spartans*, than the magnificence of the Palace of *Menelaus* was to their ſimplicity. "But he does not name "the Bard, or the ſubject of his ſongs." But is this a reaſon why the verſes are ſpurious? we ſhould rather admire the judgment of

the

That day, to great *Achilles'* ſon reſign'd
Hermione, (the faireſt of her kind)
Was ſent to crown the long protracted joy,
Eſpous'd before the final doom of *Troy:*
With ſteeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nympth to *Phthia*'s diſtant reign.
Mean-while at home, to *Megapenthes'* bed
The virgin choir *Alector*'s daughter led.
Brave *Megapenthes*, from a ſtol'n amour
To great *Atrides'* age his hand-maid bore:
To *Helen*'s bed the Gods alone aſſign
Hermione, t' extend the regal line;
On whom a radiant pomp of Graces wait,
Reſembling *Venus* in attractive ſtate.

the Poet, who having ſo fair an opportunity to deſcribe theſe nuptials, yet rejects the temptation, diſmiſſes the whole in a few lines, and follows where his ſubject leads him. The objection about the dance being *Cretan* is not more valid: *Menelaus* (as we may learn from the preceding book) had been in *Crete*, and might bring it thence to *Lacedæmon*. And as for the Criticiſm upon ἐξάρχοντες, it is but a fallacy; *Caſaubon* has ſhewn beyond contradiction, that ἐξάρχειν is applied indifferently to all thoſe who give example to others; and conſequently may be applied to Dancers as well as Muſicians. It may be further added, that altho' it ſhould be allowed that the word ἐξάρχειν is only properly applied to muſic, yet in this place the word would not be improperly applied to dancers; for the dancers, without uſurping upon the province of the ſinger, might μολπῆς ἐξάρχειν, or chuſe thoſe ſongs, to which they deſired to dance, as is the uſage at this day.

Diodorus is of opinion, that the whole twelve lines after the ſecond to the fifteenth are not genuine; but what has been ſaid of *Athenæus*, may be applied to *Diodorus*.

While this gay friendly troop the King ſurround,
With feſtival and mirth the roofs reſound:
A Bard amid the joyous circle ſings
High airs attemper'd to the vocal ſtrings;
Whilſt warbling to the varied ſtrain, advance
Two ſprightly youths to form the bounding dance.
'Twas then, that iſſuing thro' the palace gate
The ſplendid car roll'd ſlow in regal ſtate:
On the bright eminence young *Neſtor* ſhone,
And faſt beſide him great *Ulyſſes*' ſon:
Grave *Eteoneus* ſaw the pomp appear,
And ſpeeding, thus addreſs'd the royal ear.
Two youths approach, whoſe ſemblant features prove
Their blood devolving from the ſource of *Jove*.
Is due reception deign'd, or muſt they bend
Their doubtful courſe to ſeek a diſtant friend?
Inſenſate! with a ſigh the King replies,
Too long, miſ-judging, have I thought thee wiſe:

V. 37. Menelaus *blames* Eteoneus.] This is the firſt appearance of *Menelaus*; and ſurely nothing can more reconcile him to the favour of the ſpectators, than thoſe amiable colours in which the Poet paints him. There is an overflow of humanity and gratitude in his expreſſions, like that of *Dido* in *Virgil*,

Non ignara mali miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.

They contain a fine piece of morality, and teach that thoſe men are more tender-hearted and humane who have felt the reverſe of fortune, than thoſe who have only lived in a condition of proſperity.

But ſure relentleſs folly ſteels thy breaſt,
Obdurate to reject the ſtranger-gueſt;
To thoſe dear hoſpitable rites a foe,
Which in my wand'rings oft reliev'd my woe:
Fed by the bounty of another's board,
'Till pitying *Jove* my native realm reſtor'd ——
Strait be the courſers from the car releaſt,
Conduct the youths to grace the genial feaſt.
The Seneſhal rebuk'd in haſte withdrew;
With equal haſte a menial train purſue:
Part led the courſers, from the car enlarg'd,
Each to a crib with choiceſt grain ſurcharg'd;
Part in a portico, profuſely grac'd
With rich magnificence, the chariot plac'd:
Then to the dome the friendly pair invite,
Who eye the dazling roofs with vaſt delight;
Reſplendent as the blaze of ſummer-noon,
Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
From room to room their eager view they bend;
Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, deſcend;
Where a bright damſel-train attend the gueſts
With liquid odours, and embroider'd veſts.
Refreſh'd, they wait them to the bow'r of ſtate,
Where circled with his Peers *Atrides* ſate:
Thron'd next the King, a fair attendant brings
The pureſt product of the chryſtal ſprings;

High on a maſſy vaſe of ſilver mold,
The burniſh'd laver flames with ſolid gold:
In ſolid gold the purple vintage flows,
And on the board a ſecond banquet roſe.
When thus the King with hoſpitable port: ——
Accept this welcome to the *Spartan* court;
The waſte of nature let the feaſt repair,
Then your high lineage and your names declare:
Say from what ſcepter'd anceſtry ye claim,
Recorded eminent in deathleſs fame?
For vulgar parents cannot ſtamp their race
With ſignatures of ſuch majeſtic grace.
Ceaſing, benevolent he ſtrait aſſigns
The royal portion of the choiceſt chines
To each accepted friend: with grateful haſte
They ſhare the honours of the rich repaſt.
Suffic'd, ſoft whiſpering thus to *Neſtor*'s ſon,
His head reclin'd, young *Ithacus* begun.
View'ſt thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd moſt!
Theſe prodigies of art, and wond'rous coſt!

V. 81. *Soft-whiſpering thus to* Neſtor's *ſon.*] This may be thought a circumſtance of no importance, and very trivial in *Telemachus*; but it ſhews his addreſs and decency: He whiſpers, to avoid the appearance of a flatterer, or to conceal his own inexperience, in ſhewing too much ſurprize at the magnificence of the Palace of *Menelaus*. *Euſtathius.*

Above,

Above, beneath, around the Palace ſhines
The ſumleſs treaſure of exhauſted mines:
The ſpoils of elephants the roofs inlay,
And ſtudded amber darts a golden ray:
Such, and not nobler, in the realms above
My wonder dictates is the dome of *Jove.*

The Monarch took the word, and grave reply'd.
Preſumptuous are the vaunts, and vain the pride
Of man, who dares in pomp with *Jove* conteſt,
Unchang'd, immortal, and ſupremely bleſt!
With all my affluence when my woes are weigh'd,
Envy will own, the purchaſe dearly paid.
For eight ſlow-circling years by tempeſts toſt,
From *Cyprus* to the far *Phœnician* coaſt,

V. 91. *The Monarch took the word,* &c.] The ancients, ſays *Euſtathius,* obſerve the prudence of *Menelaus,* in his reply to *Telemachus*; and the prudence of *Telemachus* in his behaviour to *Menelaus: Menelaus* denies not his riches and magnificence; but to take off the envy which they might attract, he throws the calamities he has undergone into the contrary ſcale, and balances his felicity with his misfortunes: And *Telemachus* coming into the Palace at the time of an entertainment, chuſes to ſatisfy his curioſity rather than his appetite. *Plutarch,* I confeſs, condemns *Telemachus* of inexperience; who when he ſaw the Palace of *Neſtor* furniſhed only with things uſeful to life, as beds, tables, *&c.* is ſeized with no admiration; but the ſuperfluities of *Menelaus,* his ivory, amber and gold, *&c.* carry him into tranſports: whereas a *Socrates* or a *Diogenes* would have exclaimed, What heaps of vanities have I beheld! 'Tis true, ſuch a judgment might become Philoſophers; but who, as *Dacier* obſerves, can think the character of a *Socrates* or a *Diogenes* ſuitable to young *Telemachus?* What is decent in a Prince, and a young man, would ill become the gravity and wiſdom of a Philoſopher.

(*Sidon* the Capital) I ſtretch'd my toil
Thro' regions fatten'd with the flows of *Nile*.
Next, *Æthiopia*'s utmoſt bound explore,
And the parch'd borders of th' *Arabian* ſhore:
Then warp my voyage on the ſouthern gales,
O'er the warm *Libyan* wave to ſpread my ſails:
That happy clime! where each revolving year
The teeming ewes a triple offspring bear.

And

V. 100. *Thro' regions fatten'd with the flows of* Nile. *Next,* Æthiopia, *&c.*]

The words are in the original Αἰγυπτίους ἐπαλήθεις, others read them Αἰγυπτίους ἐπ' ἀληθείης, from their veracity in oracles, for which they were very famous; and indeed the word ἐπαλήθεις is not neceſſary, it being uſed in the very ſame ſentence, though it muſt be confeſſed ſuch repetitions are frequent in *Homer*. There is alſo a different reading of the word ἐρέμβους; ſome have it ἐρέμνους, or *Blacks*; others, Σιδονίους Ἀραβάς τε; but the common reading is thought the beſt. The *Erembi* are the *Arabian* Troglodytes. *Strabo* informs us, that in former ages the bounds of the *Æthiopians* lay near to *Thebes* in *Ægypt*, ſo that *Menelaus* travelling to *Thebes*, might with eaſe viſit the *Æthiopians*. Others have without any foundation imagined that he paſſed the ſtreights of *Gibralter*, and ſailed to the *Indies*. *Sidon* is the capital of the *Phœnicians Euſtathius*.

V. 105. —— *Where each revolving year*
The teeming ewes, &c.]

Theſe ſheep, as deſcribed by *Homer*, may be thought the creation of the Poet, and not the production of nature: But *Herodotus*, ſays *Euſtathius*, writes, that in *Scythia* the oxen have no horns through the extremity of the cold: He quotes this very verſe, rightly intimating, adds *Herodotus*, that in hot regions the horns of cattle ſhoot very ſpeedily. *Ariſtotle* directly aſſerts, that in *Libya* the young ones of horned cattle have horns immediately after they are brought into the world. So that *Ariſtotle* and *Herodotus* vindicate *Homer*.

The

And two fair creſcents of tranſlucent horn
The brows of all their young increaſe adorn:
The ſhepherd ſwains with ſure abundance bleſt,
On the fat flock and rural dainties feaſt;
Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
But every ſeaſon fills the foaming pail.
Whilſt heaping unwiſh'd wealth, I diſtant roam;
The beſt of brothers, at his natal home,

The Poet adds, that the ſheep breed three times in the year; theſe words may have a different interpretation, and imply that they breed in three ſeaſons of the year, and not only in the ſpring, as in other countries; or that the ſheep have at once three lambs; but the firſt is the better interpretation. *Athenæus* upon this paſſage writes, that there are things in other countries no leſs ſtrange than what *Homer* relates of theſe ſheep of *Libya*. Thus in *Luſitania*, a country of *Spain*, now *Portugal*, there is a wonderful fruitfulneſs in all cattle, by reaſon of the excellent temper of the air; the fruits there never rot, and the roſes, violets and aſparagus, never fail above three months in the year. *Euſt.*

V. 114. *The beſt of brothers,* ——
—— *a traitreſs wife.*]

Menelaus neither mentions *Agamemnon*, *Clytemneſtra*, nor *Ægyſthus* by name; a juſt indignation and reſentment is the occaſion of his ſuppreſſing the names of *Clytemneſtra* and *Ægyſthus*. Through the whole *Iliad* *Menelaus* is deſcribed as a very affectionate brother, and the love he bears *Agamemnon* is the reaſon why he paſſes by his name in ſilence. We ſee that he diſpatches the whole in one verſe and a half; *Neſtor* had told the ſtory pretty largely in the preceding book, and as he was a perſon leſs nearly concerned, might ſpeak of it with more eaſe and better temper than *Menelaus*; the Poet avoids a needleſs repetition, and a repetition too of a ſtory univerſally known to all the *Greeks*. The death of *Agamemnon* is diſtributed into four places in the *Odyſſey*; *Neſtor*, *Menelaus*, *Proteus*, and the ſhade of *Agamemnon* in the 11th book, all relate it; and every one very properly. *Proteus* as a prophet more fully than *Neſtor* and *Menelaus*, and *Agamemnon* more fully than them all, as being beſt acquainted with it. *Euſtathius.*

By the dire fury of a traitreſs wife,
Ends the ſad evening of a ſtormy life:
Whence with inceſſant grief my ſoul annoy'd,
Theſe riches are poſſeſs'd, but not enjoy'd!
My wars, the copious theme of ev'ry tongue,
To you, your fathers have recorded long:
How fav'ring heav'n repaid my glorious toils
With a ſack'd Palace, and barbaric ſpoils.
Oh! had the Gods ſo large a boon deny'd,
And Life, the juſt equivalent, ſupply'd
To thoſe brave warriors, who with glory fir'd,
Far from their country in my cauſe expir'd!
Still in ſhort intervals of pleaſing woe,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,

V. 119. *My wars, the copious theme,* &c.] In the original *Menelaus* ſays, *I have deſtroy'd a houſe,* &c. There is an ambiguity in the expreſſion, as *Euſtathius* obſerves: for it may either ſignify the *houſe of* Priam, or his own in *Argos*; if it be underſtood of his own, then the meaning is, "I have indeed great wealth, but have "purchaſed it with the loſs of my people; I could be content "with the third part of it, if I could reſtore thoſe to life who "have periſhed before *Troy*." If it be underſtood of the kingdom of *Priam*, the regret he ſhews will ſtill appear the greater. He is enumerating his domeſtick happineſs, and his foreign conqueſt of *Troy*; but he throws the deſtruction of ſo many brave men who fell before it, in the contrary ſcale; and it ſo far outweighs both his wealth and his glory, that they both are joyleſs to him. Either of theſe interpretations ſhew an excellent temper of humanity in *Menelaus*, who thinks the effuſion of blood too dear a price for glory. At the ſame time the Poet gives an admirable picture of human nature, which is reſtleſs in the purſuit of what it miſcalls happineſs, and when in poſſeſſion of it, neglects it. But the diſquiet of *Menelaus* ariſes not from inconſtancy of temper, but wiſdom; it ſhews that all happineſs is unſatisfactory.

I to the glorious dead, for ever dear!
Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear.
But oh! *Ulyſſes* —— deeper than the reſt
That ſad idea wounds my anxious breaſt!
My heart bleeds freſh with agonizing pain;
The bowl, and taſteful viands tempt in vain,
Nor ſleep's ſoft pow'r can cloſe my ſtreaming eyes,
When imag'd to my ſoul his ſorrows riſe.
No peril in my cauſe he ceas'd to prove,
His labours equall'd only by my love:
And both alike to bitter fortune born,
For him, to ſuffer, and for me to mourn!
Whether he wanders on ſome friendly coaſt,
Or glides in *Stygian* gloom a penſive ghoſt,
No fame reveals; but doubtful of his doom,
His good old Sire with ſorrow to the tomb

V. 131. *But oh!* Ulyſſes —— *&c.*] It is with admirable addreſs that the Poet falls into his ſubject: it is art, but it ſeems to be nature: This conduct has a double effect, it takes away all ſuſpicion of flattery, for *Menelaus* is ignorant that the perſon with whom he diſcourſes is *Telemachus*; this gives him a manifeſt evidence of the love he bears to *Ulyſſes*; the young man could not but be pleaſed with the praiſe of his father, and with the ſincerity of it. It is alſo obſervable, that *Menelaus* builds his friendſhip for *Ulyſſes* upon a noble foundation; I mean the ſufferings which *Ulyſſes* underwent for his friend: *Menelaus* aſcribes not their affection to any familiarity or intercourſe of entertainments, but to a more ſincere cauſe, to the hazards which brave men undertake for a friend. In ſhort, the friendſhip of *Menelaus* and *Ulyſſes* is the friendſhip of Heroes. *Euſtathius.*

Declines his trembling ſteps; untimely care
Withers the blooming vigour of his heir;
And the chaſte partner of his bed and throne,
Waſtes all her widow'd hours in tender moan.
While thus pathetic to the Prince he ſpoke:
From the brave youth the ſtreaming paſſion broke:
Studious to veil the grief, in vain repreſt,
His face he ſhrouded with his purple veſt:
The conſcious Monarch pierc'd the coy diſguiſe,
And view'd his filial love with vaſt ſurprize:
Dubious to preſs the tender theme, or wait
To hear the youth enquire his father's fate.
In this ſuſpenſe bright *Helen* grac'd the room;
Before her breath'd a gale of rich perfume.

So

V. 157. —— *Bright* Helen *grac'd the room.*] *Menelaus* conjectured that the perſon he had entertained was the ſon of *Ulyſſes*, from the tears he ſhed at the name of his father, and from the reſemblance there was between *Ulyſſes* and *Telemachus*; it might therefore have been expected that *Menelaus* ſhould immediately have acknowledged *Telemachus*, and not delay'd a full diſcovery one moment, out of regard to his abſent friend; but *Menelaus* defers it upon a two-fold account, to give ſome time to *Telemachus* to indulge his ſorrow for his father, and recover himſelf from it, and alſo to avoid the repetition of a diſcovery upon the appearance of *Helen*, who would be curious to know the condition of the ſtrangers.

It may be neceſſary to ſay ſomething concerning *Helen*, that fatal beauty that engaged *Greece* and *Aſia* in arms; ſhe is drawn in the ſame colours in the *Odyſſey* as in the *Iliad*; it is a vicious character, but the colours are ſo admirably ſoftened by the art of the Poet, that we pardon her infidelity. *Menelaus* is an uncommon inſtance of conjugal affection, he forgives a wife who had been falſe to him, and receives her into a full degree of favour. But perhaps the Reader might have been ſhocked at it, and prejudiced againſt *Helen* as a perſon

So moves, adorn'd with each attractive grace,
The ſilver-ſhafted Goddeſs of the Chace!
The ſeat of majeſty *Adraſte* brings,
With art illuſtrious, for the pomp of Kings.
To ſpread the pall beneath the regal chair
Of ſofteſt woof, is bright *Alcippe*'s care.
A ſilver canifter divinely wrought,
In her ſoft hands the beauteous *Phylo* brought:
To *Sparta*'s Queen of old the radiant vaſe
Alcandra gave, a pledge of royal grace:
For *Polybus* her Lord, (whoſe ſov'reign ſway
The wealthy tribes of *Pharian Thebes* obey)
When to that court *Atrides* came, careſt
With vaſt munificence th' imperial gueſt:
Two lavers from the richeſt ore refin'd,
With ſilver tripods, the kind hoſt aſſign'd;
And bounteous, from the royal treaſure told
Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.

ſon that ought to be forgot, or have her name only mentioned to diſgrace it: The Poet therefore, to reconcile her to his Reader, brings her in as a penitent, condemning her own infidelity in very ſtrong expreſſions; ſhe ſhews true modeſty, when ſhe calls herſelf impudent, and by this conduct we are inclined, like *Menelaus*, to forgive her.

V. 161, *&c.* Adraſte, Alcippe, Helen's *Maids.*] It has been obſerved, that *Helen* has not the ſame attendants in the *Odeſſy* as ſhe had in the *Iliad*; they perhaps might be *Trojans*, and conſequently be left in their own country: or rather, it was an act of prudence in *Menelaus*, not to ſuffer thoſe ſervants about her who had been her attendants and confidents in her infidelity. *Euſtathius.*

Alcandra,

Alcandra, conſort of his high command,
A golden diſtaff gave to *Helen*'s hand;
And that rich vaſe, with living ſculpture wrought,
Which heap'd with wool the beauteous *Phylo* brought:
The ſilken fleece impurpl'd for the loom,
Rival'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom.
The ſovereign ſeat then *Jove*-born *Helen* preſs'd,
And pleaſing thus her ſcepter'd Lord addreſs'd.
Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair,
Speak they their lineage, or their names declare?
Uncertain of the truth, yet uncontroul'd
Hear me the bodings of my breaſt unfold.
With wonder rapt, on yonder cheek I trace
The feature of the *Ulyſſean* race:
Diffus'd o'er each reſembling line appear,
In juſt ſimilitude, the grace and air
Of young *Telemachus!* the lovely boy,
Who bleſs'd *Ulyſſes* with a father's joy.

V. 192. ——— *The grace and air*
Of young Telemachus!]

It may ſeem ſtrange that *Helen* ſhould at firſt view recollect the features of *Ulyſſes* in *Telemachus*; and that *Menelaus*, who was better acquainted with him, and his conſtant friend, ſhould not make the ſame obſervation. But *Athenæus*, to reconcile this to probability, ſays, that women are curious and ſkilful obſervers of the likeneſs of children to parents, for one particular reaſon, that they may, upon finding any diſſimilitude, have the pleaſure of hinting at the unchaſtity of others.

What

What time the *Greeks* combin'd their ſocial arms,
T' avenge the ſtain of my ill-fated charms!
Juſt is thy thought, the King aſſenting cries,
Methinks *Ulyſſes* ſtrikes my wond'ring eyes:
Full ſhines the father in the filial frame,
His port, his features, and his ſhape the ſame:
Such quick regards his ſparkling eyes beſtow;
Such wavy ringlets o'er his ſhoulders flow!
And when he heard the long diſaſtrous ſtore
Of cares, which in my cauſe *Ulyſſes* bore;
Diſmay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes,
Above reſtraint the tide of ſorrow roſe:
Cautious to let the guſhing grief appear,
His purple garment veil'd the falling tear.
See there confeſt, *Piſiſtratus* replies,
The genuine worth of *Ithacus* the wiſe!
Of that heroic fire the youth is ſprung,
But modeſt awe hath chain'd his tim'rous tongue.
Thy voice, O King! with pleas'd attention heard,
Is like the dictates of a God rever'd.
With him at *Neſtor*'s high command I came,
Whoſe age I honour with a parent's name.
By adverſe deſtiny conſtrain'd to ſue
For counſel and redreſs, he ſues to you.
Whatever ill the friendleſs orphan bears,
Bereav'd of parents in his infant years,

Still muſt the wrong'd *Telemachus* ſuſtain,
If hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain:
Affianc'd in your friendly pow'r alone,
The youth wou'd vindicate the vacant throne.
Is *Sparta* bleſt, and theſe deſiring eyes
View my friend's ſon? (the King exulting cries)
Son of my friend, by glorious toils approv'd,
Whoſe ſword was ſacred to the man he lov'd:
Mirror of conſtant faith, rever'd, and mourn'd! ——
When *Troy* was ruin'd, had the chief return'd,
No *Greek* an equal ſpace had e'er poſſeſt
Of dear affection, in my grateful breaſt.
I, to confirm the mutual joys we ſhar'd,
For his abode a Capital prepar'd;
Argos the ſeat of ſovereign rule I choſe;
Fair in the plan the future palace roſe,
Where my *Ulyſſes* and his race might reign,
And portion to his tribes the wide domain.
To them my vaſſals had reſign'd a ſoil,
With teeming plenty to reward their toil.
There with commutual zeal we both had ſtrove
In acts of dear benevolence, and love:

V. 234. *For his abode a Capital prepar'd.*] The Poet puts theſe words in the mouth of *Menelaus*, to expreſs the ſincerity of his friendſhip to *Ulyſſes*; he intended him all advantage, and no detriment: we muſt therefore conclude, that *Ulyſſes* was ſtill to retain his ſovereignty over *Ithaca*, and only remove to *Argos*, to live with ſo ſincere a friend as *Menelaus*. *Euſtathius*.

Brothers in peace, not rivals in command,
And death alone diſſolv'd the friendly band!
Some envious pow'r the bliſsful ſcene deſtroys;
Vaniſh'd are all the viſionary joys:
The ſoul of friendſhip to my hope is loſt,
Fated to wander from his natal coaſt!
He ceas'd; a guſt of grief began to riſe:
Faſt ſtreams a tide from beauteous *Helen*'s eyes;
Faſt for the Sire the filial ſorrows flow;
The weeping Monarch ſwells the mighty woe:
Thy cheeks, *Piſiſtratus*, the tears bedew,
While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view
Thy martial * Brother: on the *Phrygian* plain
Extended pale, by ſwarthy *Memnon* ſlain!
But ſilence ſoon the ſon of *Neſtor* broke,
And melting with fraternal pity ſpoke.

* *Antilochus.*

V. 249. ——— *A guſt of grief began to riſe, &c.*] It has been obſerved through the *Iliad*, and may be obſerved through the whole *Odyſſey*, that it was not a diſgrace to the greateſt Heroes to ſhed tears; and indeed I cannot ſee why it ſhould be an honour to any man, to be able to diveſt himſelf of human nature ſo far as to appear inſenſible upon the moſt affecting occaſions. No man is born a Stoic: it is art, not nature; tears are only a ſhame, when the cauſe fron whence they flow is mean or vicious. Here *Menelaus* laments a friend, *Telemachus* a father, *Piſiſtratus* a brother: but from what cauſe ariſe the tears of *Helen*? It is to be remembered that *Helen* is drawn in the ſofteſt colours in the *Odyſſey*; the character of the adultreſs is loſt in that of the penitent; the name of *Ulyſſes* throws her into tears, becauſe ſhe is the occaſion of all the ſufferings of that brave man; the Poet makes her the firſt in ſorrow, as ſhe is the cauſe of all their tears.

Frequent,

Frequent, O King, was *Neſtor* wont to raiſe
And charm attention with thy copious praiſe:
To crown thy various gifts, the ſage aſſign'd
The glory of a firm capacious mind:
With that ſuperior attribute controul
This unavailing impotence of ſoul.
Let not your roof with echoing grief reſound,
Now for the feaſt the friendly bowl is crown'd:
But when from dewy ſhade emerging bright,
Aurora ſtreaks the ſky with orient light,
Let each deplore his dead: the rites of woe
Are all, alas! the living can beſtow:
O'er the congenial duſt injoin'd to ſhear
The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.
Then mingling in the mournful pomp with you,
I'll pay my brother's ghoſt a warrior's due,

V. 265. *Let not your roof with echoing grief reſound,*
Now for the feaſt the friendly bowl is crown'd:

It may be aſked why ſorrow for the dead ſhould be more unſeaſonable in the evening than the morning? *Euſtathius* anſwers, leſt others ſhould look upon our evening tears as the effect of wine, and not of love to the dead.

Intempeſtivus venit inter pocula fletus,
Nec lacrymas dulci fas eſt miſcere falerno.

I fancy there may be a more rational account given of this expreſſion; the time of feaſting was ever looked upon as a time of joy and thakſgiving to the Gods; it bore a religious veneration among the Ancients, and conſequently to ſhed tears when they ſhould expreſs their gratitude to the Gods with joy, was eſteemed a prophanation.

And

And mourn the brave *Antilochus*, a name
Not unrecorded in the rolls of fame:
With ſtrength and ſpeed ſuperior form'd, in fight
To face the foe, or intercept his flight:
Too early ſnatch'd by fate ere known to me!
I boaſt a witneſs of his worth in thee.

Young and mature! the Monarch thus rejoins,
In thee renew'd the ſoul of *Neſtor* ſhines:
Form'd by the care of that conſummate ſage,
In early bloom an Oracle of age.
When e'er his influence *Jove* vouchſafes to ſhow'r
To bleſs the natal, and the nuptial hour;
From the great ſire tranſmiſſive to the race,
The boon devolving gives diſtinguiſh'd grace.
Such, happy *Neſtor!* was thy glorious doom;
Around thee full of years, thy offſpring bloom,
Expert of arms, and prudent in debate;
The gifts of heav'n to guard thy hoary ſtate.
But now let each becalm his troubled breaſt,
Waſh, and partake ſerene the friendly feaſt.
To move thy ſuit, *Telemachus*, delay,
'Till heav'n's revolving lamp reſtores the day.

He ſaid, *Aſphalion* ſwift the laver brings;
Alternate all partake the grateful ſprings:
Then from the rites of purity repair,
And with keen guſt the ſav'ry viands ſhare.

Mean

Mean time with genial joy to warm the ſoul,
Bright *Helen* mix'd a mirth-inſpiring bowl:

Temper'd

V. 302. *Bright* Helen *mix'd a mirth inſpiring bowl*, &c.] The conjectures about this cordial of *Helen* have been almoſt infinite. Some take *Nepenthes* allegorically, to ſignify Hiſtory, Muſic or Philoſophy. *Plutarch* in the firſt of the *Sympoſiacs* affirms it to be, diſcourſe well ſuiting the preſent paſſions and conditions of the hearers. *Macrobius* is of the ſame opinion, *Delinimentum illud quod Helena vino miſcuit, non herba fuit, non ex Indiâ ſucus, ſed narrandi opportunitas, quæ hoſpitem mœroris oblitum flexit ad gaudium.* What gave a foundation to this fiction of *Homer*, as *Dacier* obſerves, might be this. *Diodorus* writes that in *Ægypt*, and chiefly at *Heliopolis*, the ſame with *Thebes* where *Menelaus* ſojourned, as has been already obſerved, there lived women who boaſted of certain potions, which not only made the unfortunate forget all their calamities, but drove away the moſt violent ſallies of grief or anger. *Euſebius* directly affirms, that even in his time the women of *Dioſpolis* were able to calm the rage of grief or anger by certain potions. Now whether this be truth or fiction, it fully vindicates *Homer*, ſince a Poet may make uſe of a prevailing, though falſe opinion.

Milton mentions this *Nepenthes* in his excellent Maſque of *Comus*.

——Behold this cordial Julep here,
That flames and dances in his chryſtal bounds!
Not that Nepenthes *which the wife of* Thone
In Ægypt *gave to* Jove-*born* Helena,
Is of ſuch pow'r as this to ſtir up joy,
To life ſo friendly, or ſo cool to thirſt.

But that there may be ſomething more than fiction in this is very probable, ſince the *Ægyptians* were ſo notoriouſly ſkilled in phyſic; and particularly ſince this very *Thon*, or *Thonis*, or *Thoon*, is reported by the Ancients to have been the inventor of phyſic among the *Ægyptians*. The deſcription of this *Nepenthes* agrees admirably with what we know of the qualities and effects of *Opium*.

It is further ſaid of *Thon*, that he was King of *Canopus*, and entertained *Menelaus* hoſpitably before he had ſeen *Helen*; but afterwards falling in love with her, and offering violence, he was ſlain by *Menelaus*. From his name the *Ægyptians* gave the name of *Thoth* to the firſt month of their year, and alſo to a city the name of *Thonis*. *Ælian* writes, that *Menelaus*, when he travelled to the *Æthiopians*,

Temper'd with drugs of ſov'reign uſe, t' aſſuage
The boiling boſom of tumultuous rage;
To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled Care,
And dry the tearful ſluices of Deſpair:
Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted mind
All ſenſe of woe delivers to the wind.
Tho' on the blazing pile his parent lay,
Or a lov'd brother groan'd his life away,
Or darling ſon, oppreſs'd by ruffian-force,
Fell breathleſs at his feet, a mangled corſe,
From morn to eve, impaſſive and ſerene,
The man entranc'd would view the deathful ſcene.
Theſe drugs, ſo friendly to the joys of life,
Bright *Helen* learn'd from *Thone*'s imperial wife;
Who ſway'd the ſceptre, where prolific *Nile*
With various ſimples cloaths the fat'ned ſoil.

Æthiopians, committed *Helen* to the protection of *Thonis*; that ſhe fell in love with him, that *Polydamna* growing jealous confined her to the Iſland *Pharos*, but gave her an herb to preſerve her from the poiſon of ſerpents there frequent, which from *Helen* was called *Helenium*. *Strabo* writes, that at *Canopus*, on the mouth of the *Nile*, there ſtands a city named *Thonies*, from King *Thonis*, who received *Helen* and *Menelaus*. *Herodotus* relates, that *Thonis* was Governor of *Canopus*, that he repreſented the injury which *Paris* had done to *Menelaus*, to *Proteus* who reigned in *Memphis*. *Euſtathius*.

This laſt remark from *Herodotus* is ſufficient to ſhew, that *Homer* is not ſo fictitious as is generally imagined, that there really was a King named *Proteus*, that the Poet builds his fables upon truth, and that it was truth that originally determined *Homer* to introduce *Proteus* into his Poetry; but I intend to explain this more largely in the ſtory of *Proteus*.

With

With wholeſome herbage mix'd, the direful bane
Of vegetable venom, taints the plain;
From *Pæon* ſprung, their patron god imparts
To all the *Pharian* race his healing arts.
The bev'rage now prepar'd t' inſpire the feaſt,
The circle thus the beauteous Queen addreſt.
Thron'd in omnipotence, ſupremeſt *Jove*
Tempers the fates of human race above;
By the firm ſanction of his ſov'reign will,
Alternate are decreed our good and ill.
To feaſtful mirth be this white hour aſſign'd,
And ſweet diſcourſe, the banquet of the mind.
Myſelf aſſiſting in the ſocial joy,
Will tell *Ulyſſes'* bold exploit in *Troy:*
Sole witneſs of the deed I now declare;
Speak you (who ſaw) his wonders in the war.
Seam'd o'er with wounds, which his own ſabre gave,
In the vile habit of a village ſlave,

The

V. 331. *Myſelf*——————
Will tell Ulyſſes' *bold exploit*——]

What is here related ſhews the neceſſity of the introduction of *Helen*, and the uſe the Poet makes of it: ſhe is not brought in merely as a *muta perſona*, to fill up the number of perſons; but ſhe relates ſeveral incidents, in which ſhe herſelf was concerned, and which ſhe could only know; and conſequently not only diverſifies, but carries on the deſign of the ſtory. *Euſtathius.*

V. 335. *Seam'd o'er with wounds*, &c.] The Poet here ſhews his judgment in paſſing over many inſtances of the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes*, and relating this piece of conduct, not mentioned by any other Author. The art of *Ulyſſes* in extricating himſelf from difficulties

The foe deceiv'd, he paſs'd the tented plain,
In *Troy* to mingle with the hoſtile train.
In this attire ſecure from ſearching eyes,
Till haply piercing thro' the dark diſguiſe
The Chief I challeng'd; he, whoſe practis'd wit
Knew all the ſerpent-mazes of deceit,
Eludes my ſearch: but when his form I view'd
Freſh from the bath with fragrant oils renew'd,
His limbs in military purple dreſs'd;
Each brightning grace the genuine *Greek* confeſs'd.

culties is laid down as the ground-work of the Poem, he is πολύτροπος, and this is an excellent example of it. This further ſhews the neceſſity of the appearance of *Helen*, no other perſon being acquainted with the ſtory. If this ſtratagem be not a reality, yet it bears the reſemblance of it; and *Megabyſus* the *Perſian* (as *Euſtathius* obſerves) practiſed it, as we learn from hiſtory. We may reaſonably conjecture that *Ulyſſes* was committed to *Helen*, in hopes that he would diſcover the affairs of the army more freely to her than any other perſon: for what could be more agreeable to a *Greek*, than to be committed to the care of a *Greek*, as *Ulyſſes* was to *Helen*? By the ſame conduct the Poet raiſes the character of *Helen*, by making her ſhew her repentance by an act of generoſity to her countryman. The original ſays ſhe gave an oath to *Ulyſſes* not to diſcover him before he was in ſafety in the *Grecian* army: Now this does not imply that ſhe ever diſcovered to the *Trojans* that *Ulyſſes* had entered *Troy*: the contrary opinion is moſt probable; for it cannot be imagined but all *Troy* muſt have been incenſed greatly againſt her, had they known that ſhe had concealed one of their mortal enemies, and diſmiſſed him in ſafety: it was ſufficient for *Ulyſſes* to take her oath that ſhe would not diſcover him, till he was in ſecurity: he left her future conduct to her own diſcretion. It is probable that ſhe furniſhed *Ulyſſes* with a ſword, for in his return he ſlew many *Trojans*: he came to *Troy*, obſerves *Euſtathius*, in rags, and like a ſlave; and to have concealed a ſword, would have endangered his life upon a diſcovery of it, and given ſtrong ſuſpicions of an impoſtor.

A previous pledge of ſacred faith obtain'd,
Till he the lines and *Argive* fleet regain'd,
To keep his ſtay conceal'd; the chief declar'd
The plans of war againſt the town prepar'd.
Exploring then the ſecrets of the ſtate,
He learn'd what beſt might urge the *Dardan* fate:
And ſafe returning to the *Grecian* hoſt,
Sent many a ſhade to *Pluto*'s dreary coaſt.
Loud grief reſounded thro' the tow'rs of *Troy*,
But my pleas'd boſom glow'd with ſecret joy:
For then with dire remorſe, and conſcious ſhame,
I view'd th' effects of that diſaſtrous flame,
Which kindled by th' imperious Queen of love,
Conſtrain'd me from my native realm to rove:

V. 351. *Exploring then the ſecrets of the ſtate.*] The word φρόνις is here uſed in a large ſenſe: it takes in all the obſervations *Ulyſſes* made during his continuance in *Troy*, it takes in the deſigns and counſels of the enemy, his meaſuring the gates, the height of the walls, the eaſieſt place for an aſſault or ambuſh, the taking away the *Palladium*, or whatever elſe a wiſe man may be ſuppoſed to obſerve, or act, in execution of ſuch a ſtratagem. *Euſtathius.*

V. 357. *For then with dire remorſe*, &c.] The concluſion of this ſpeech is very artful: *Helen* aſcribes her ſeduction to *Venus*, and mentions nothing of *Paris*. Inſtead of naming *Troy*, ſhe conceals it, and only ſays ſhe was carried thither, leaving *Troy* to the imagination of *Menelaus*; ſhe ſuffers not herſelf to mention names ſo odious now to herſelf, and ever to *Menelaus*, as *Paris* and *Troy*. She compliments *Menelaus* very handſomely, and ſays, that he wanted no accompliſhment either in mind or body: it being the nature of man not to reſent the injuries of a wife ſo much upon the account of her being corrupted, but of the preference ſhe gives to another perſon; he looks upon ſuch a preference as the moſt affecting part of the injury. *Euſtathius.*

And

And oft in bitterneſs of ſoul deplor'd
My abſent Daughter, and my dearer Lord;
Admir'd among the firſt of human race,
For ev'ry gift of mind, and manly grace.
Right well, reply'd the King, your ſpeech diſplays
The matchleſs merit of the chief you praiſe:
Heroes in various climes myſelf have found,
For martial deeds, and depth of thought renown'd:
But *Ithacus*, unrival'd in his claim,
May boaſt a title to the loudeſt fame:
In battle calm he guides the rapid ſtorm,
Wiſe to reſolve, and patient to perform.
What wond'rous conduct in the chief appear'd,
When the vaſt fabrick of the Steed we rear'd!
Some Dæmon anxious for the *Trojan* doom,
Urg'd you with great *Deiphobus* to come,

T' explore

V. 365. Menelaus's *anſwer.*] The judgment of the Poet in continuing the ſtory concerning *Ulyſſes* is not obſerved by any Commentator. *Ulyſſes* is the chief Hero of the Poem, every thing ſhould have a reference to him, otherwiſe the narration ſtands ſtill without any advance towards the concluſion of it. The Poet therefore to keep *Ulyſſes* in our minds, dwells upon his ſufferings and adventures: he ſupplies his not appearing in the preſent ſcene of action, by ſetting his character before us, and continually forcing his prudence, patience, and valour upon our obſervation. He uſes the ſame art and judgment with relation to *Achilles* in the *Iliads:* The Hero of the Poem is abſent from the chief ſcenes of action during much of the time which that Poem compriſes, but he is continually brought into the mind of the Reader, by recounting his exploits and glory.

V. 375. *Some Dæmon anxious for the* Trojan *doom.*] It is the obſervation of *Euſtathius*, that theſe words are very artfully introduced to vindicate *Helen*; they imply that what ſhe acted was by compulſion,

T' explore the fraud; with guile oppos'd to guile,
Slow-pacing thrice around th' inſidious pile;

Each

ſion, and to evidence this more clearly, *Deiphobus* is given her for an attendant, as a ſpy upon her actions, that ſhe might not conceal any thing that ſhould happen, but act her part well, by endeavouring to deceive the *Greeks* in favour of *Troy*. It is the Dæmon, not *Helen*, that is in fault; this, continues *Euſtathius*, anſwers many objections that lie againſt *Helen*: for if ſhe was a real penitent, as ſhe herſelf affirms, how comes ſhe to endeavour to deceive the *Greeks* by the diſguiſe of her voice, into more miſery than had yet ariſen from a ten years war? Or indeed is it credible that any perſon could modulate her voice ſo artfully as to reſemble ſo many voices? And how could the *Greeks* incloſed in the wooden horſe believe that their wives who were in *Greece*, could be arrived in ſo ſhort a ſpace as they had been concealed there, from the various regions of *Greece*, and meet together in *Troy*? Would the wives of theſe Heroes come into an enemy's country, when the whole army, except theſe latent Heroes, were retired from it? this is ridiculous and impoſſible. I muſt confeſs there is great weight in theſe objections: But *Euſtathius* anſwers all by the interpoſition of the Dæmon; and by an idle tradition that *Helen* had the name of *Echo*, from the faculty of mimicking ſounds; and that this gift was beſtowed upon her by *Venus* when ſhe married *Menelaus*, that ſhe might be able to detect him, if he ſhould prove falſe to her bed, by imitating the voice of the ſuſpected perſon, (but *Menelaus* had more occaſion for this faculty than *Helen*.) As for the excuſe of the Dæmon, it equally excuſes all crimes: for inſtance, was *Helen* falſe to *Menelaus*? The Dæmon occaſioned it: Does ſhe act an impoſture to deſtroy all her *Grecian* friends, and even *Menelaus*? The Dæmon compels her to it: The Dæmon compels her to go with *Deiphobus*, to ſurround the horſe thrice, to ſound the ſides of it, to endeavour to ſurprize the latent *Greeks* by an imitation of the voices of their wives, and in ſhort, to act like a perſon that was very ſincere in miſchief.

Dacier takes another courſe, and gives up *Helen*, but remarks the great addreſs of *Menelaus*. *Helen* had, ſaid ſhe, long deſired nothing ſo much as to return to *Lacedæmon*; and her heart had long been wholly turned to *Menelaus*: *Menelaus* is not at all convinced of this pretended ſincerity; but it would have been too groſs, after he had taken her again to his bed, to convict her of falſhood: He therefore contents himſelf barely to reply, that ſome Dæmon, an enemy to the *Greeks*, had forced her to a conduct diſagreeable to her ſincerity. This (continues *Dacier*) is an artful, but ſevere irony.

As

Each noted leader's name you thrice invoke,
Your accent varying as their ſpouſes ſpoke:
The pleaſing ſounds each latent warrior warm'd,
But moſt *Tydides'* and my heart alarm'd:
To quit the ſteed we both impatient preſs,
Threat'ning to anſwer from the dark receſs.
Unmov'd the mind of *Ithacus* remain'd:
And the vain ardors of our love reſtrain'd:

As for the objection concerning the impoſſibility of the *Greeks* believing their wives could be in *Troy*; ſhe anſwers, that the Authors of this objection have not ſufficiently conſidered human nature. The voice of a beloved perſon might of a ſudden, and by ſurprize, draw from any perſon a word involuntary, before he has time to make reflection. This undoubtedly is true, where circumſtances make an impoſture probable; but here is an impoſſibility; it is utterly impoſſible to believe the wives of theſe Heroes could be in *Troy*. Beſides, *Menelaus* himſelf tells us, that even he had fallen into the ſnare, but *Ulyſſes* prevented it; this adds to the incredibility of the ſtory; for if this faculty of mimickry was given upon his marriage with *Helen*, it was nothing new to him; he muſt be ſuppoſed to be acquainted with it, and conſequently be the leſs liable to ſurprize: Nay it is not impoſſible, but the experiment might have been made upon him before *Helen* fled away with *Paris*.

In ſhort, I think this paſſage wants a further vindication; the circumſtances are low, if not incredible. *Virgil*, the great imitator of *Homer*, has given us a very different and more noble deſcription of the deſtruction of *Troy*: he has not thought fit to imitate him in this deſcription.

If we allow *Helen* to act by compulſion, to have feared the *Trojans*, and that *Deiphobus* was ſent as a ſpy upon her actions; yet this is no vindication of her conduct: ſhe ſtill acts a mean part, and through fear becomes an accomplice in endeavouring to betray and ruin the *Greeks*.

I ſhall juſt add, that after the death of *Paris*, *Helen* marries *Deiphobus*; that the ſtory of the wooden horſe is probably founded upon the taking of *Troy* by an engine called a Horſe, as the like engine was called a Ram by the *Romans*.

But *Anticlus* unable to controul,
Spoke loud the language of his yearning ſoul:
Ulyſſes ſtrait with indignation fir'd,
(For ſo the common care of *Greece* requir'd)
Firm to his lips his forceful hands apply'd,
Till on his tongue the flutt'ring murmurs dy'd.
Mean time *Minerva* from the fraudful horſe,
Back to the court of *Priam* bent your courſe.
Inclement fate! *Telemachus* replies,
Frail is the boaſted attribute of wiſe:
The leader, mingling with the vulgar hoſt,
Is in the common maſs of matter loſt!
But now let ſleep the painful waſte repair
Of ſad reflection, and corroding care.
He ceas'd; the menial fair that round her wait,
At *Helen*'s beck prepare the room of ſtate;
Beneath an ample Portico, they ſpread
The downy fleece to form the ſlumbrous bed;
And o'er ſoft palls of purple grain unfold
Rich tapeſtry, ſtiff with inwoven gold:
Then thro' th' illumin'd dome, to balmy reſt
Th' obſequious Herald guides each princely gueſt:
While to his regal bow'r the King aſcends,
And beauteous *Helen* on her Lord attends.
Soon as the morn, in orient purple dreſt,
Unbarr'd the portal of the roſeate Eaſt,

The

The Monarch roſe; magnificent to view,
Th' imperial mantle o'er his veſt he threw;
The glitt'ring zone athwart his ſhoulder caſt
A ſtarry faulchion low-depending grac'd,
Claſp'd on his feet th' embroider'd ſandals ſhine,
And forth he moves, majeſtic and divine:
Inſtant to young *Telemachus* he preſs'd,
And thus benevolent his ſpeech addreſs'd.

Say, royal youth, ſincere of ſoul, report
What cauſe hath led you to the *Spartan* court?
Do public or domeſtic cares conſtrain
This toilſome voyage o'er the ſurgy main?
O highly-favour'd delegate of *Jove!*
(Replies the Prince) inflam'd with filial love,
And anxious hope, to hear my parent's doom,
A ſuppliant to your royal court I come.
Our ſov'reign ſeat a lewd uſurping race
With lawleſs riot, and miſ-rule diſgrace;
To pamper'd inſolence devoted fall
Prime of the flock, and choiceſt of the ſtall:
For wild ambition wings their bold deſire,
And all to mount th' imperial bed aſpire.
But proſtrate I implore, oh King! relate
The mournful ſeries of my father's fate:
Each known diſaſter of the Man diſcloſe,
Born by his mother to a world of woes!

Recite them! nor in erring pity fear
To wound with ſtoried grief the filial ear:
If e'er *Ulyſſes*, to reclaim your right,
Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight,
If *Phrygian* camps the friendly toils atteſt,
To the ſire's merit give the ſon's requeſt,
Deep from his inmoſt ſoul *Atrides* ſigh'd,
And thus indignant to the Prince reply'd:
Heav'ns! would a ſoft, inglorious, daſtard train
An abſent hero's nuptial joys profane!

V. 447. *Heav'ns! would a ſoft, inglorious, daſtard train.*] *Menelaus* is fired with indignation at the injuries offered his friend by the Suitors: he breaks out into an exclamation, and in a juſt contempt vouchſafes not to mention them: he thinks he fully diſtinguiſhes whom he intends, by calling them ἀνάλκιδες αὐτοὶ, *thoſe cowards.* The compariſon which he introduces is very juſt, they are the Fawns, *Ulyſſes* is the Lion.

This is the firſt ſimile that *Homer* has inſerted in the *Odyſſey*; but I cannot think it proceeded from a barrenneſs of invention, or through phlegm in the declenſion of his years, as ſome have imagined. The nature of the Poem requires a difference of ſtile from the *Iliad!* The *Iliad* ruſhes along like a torrent; the *Odyſſey* flows gently on like a deep ſtream, with a ſmooth tranquillity; *Achilles* is all fire, *Ulyſſes* all wiſdom.

The ſimile in *Homer* is really beautiful; but in *Hobbs* ridiculous.

As when a ſtag and hind ent'ring the den
Of th' abſent Lion, lulls his whelps with tales,
Of hills and dales; the Lion comes agen,
And tears them into pieces with his nails.

Can any thing be more foreign to the ſenſe of *Homer*, or worſe tranſlated? He conſtrues κρημνὼς ἐξερέησι, by telling ſtories of hills and dales to the Lion's whelps, inſtead of *Juga inveſtigat:* but ſuch miſtakes are ſo frequent in *Hobbs*, that one would almoſt ſuſpect his learning in *Greek:* he has diſgraced the beſt Poet, and a very great Hiſtorian; *Homer*, and *Thucydides*.

So

So with her young, amid the woodland ſhades
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,
Leaves in the fatal laire the tender fawns,
Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flow'ry lawns.
Mean time return'd, with dire remorſeleſs ſway
The monarch-ſavage rends the trembling prey.
With equal fury, and with equal fame,
Ulyſſes ſoon ſhall re-aſſert his claim.
O *Jove*, ſupreme, whom Gods and men revere!
And * thou, to whom 'tis giv'n to gild the ſphere!
With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the Martial maid!
Such to our wiſh the warrior ſoon reſtore,
As when contending on the *Leſbian* ſhore
His proweſs *Philomelides* confeſs'd,
And loud-acclaiming *Greeks* the victor bleſs'd:
Then ſoon th' invaders of his bed and throne,
Their love preſumptuous ſhall with life atone.
With patient ear, oh royal youth, attend
The ſtoried labours of thy father's friend:

* *Apollo.*

V. 462. *As when contending on the* Leſbian *ſhore.*] The Poet here gives an account of one of *Ulyſſes*'s adventures. *Philomelides* was King of *Leſbos*, and *Euſtathius* obſerves, that there was a tradition that *Ulyſſes* and *Diomedes* ſlew him, and turned a ſtately monument he had raiſed for himſelf into a public place for the reception of ſtrangers.

Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
But truth ſevere ſhall dictate to my tongue:
Learn what I heard the ſea-born Seer relate,
Whoſe eye can pierce the dark receſs of Fate.
Long on th' *Ægyptian* coaſt by calms confin'd,
Heav'n to my fleet refus'd a proſp'rous wind:
No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim ſlain!
For this the Gods each fav'ring gale reſtrain.
Jealous, to ſee their high beheſts obey'd,
Severe, if men th' eternal rights evade?
High o'er a gulphy ſea, the *Pharian* iſle
Fronts the deep roar of diſemboguing *Nile*:

Her

V. 479. ——*The* Pharian *Iſle.*] This deſcription of *Pharos* has given great trouble to the Critics and Geographers; it is generally concluded, that the diſtance of *Pharos* is about ſeven ſtadia from *Alexandria*; *Ammianus Marcellinus* mentions this very paſſage thus; *l.* 22. *Inſula Pharos, ubi Proteæ cum Phocarum gregibus diverſatum Homerus fabulatur inflatius, à civitatis littore mille paſſibus diſparata*, or, *about a mile diſtant from the ſhores.* How then comes *Homer* to affirm it to be diſtant a full day's ſail? *Dacier* anſwers, that *Homer* might have heard that the *Nile*, continually bringing down much earthy ſubſtance, had enlarged the continent: and knowing it not to be ſo diſtant in his time, took the liberty of a Poet, and deſcribed it as ſtill more diſtant in the days of *Menelaus*. But *Dacier* never ſees a miſtake in *Homer*. Had his Poetry been worſe if he had deſcribed the real diſtance of *Pharos*? It is allowable in a Poet to diſguiſe the truth, to adorn his ſtory; but what ornament has he given his Poetry by this enlargement? *Bochart* has fully proved that there is no acceſſion to the Continent from any ſubſtance that the *Nile* brings down with it: the violent agitation of the ſeas prohibit it from lodging, and forming itſelf into ſolidity. *Eratoſthenes* is of opinion, that *Homer* was ignorant of the mouths of *Nile*; but *Strabo* anſwers, that his ſilence about them is not an argument of his ignorance, for neither has he ever mentioned where he was born. But *Strabo* does not enter fully into the meaning of *Eratoſthenes*: *Eratoſthenes* does

Her diſtance from the ſhore, the courſe begun
At dawn, and ending with the ſetting ſun,
A galley meaſures; when the ſtiffer gales
Riſe on the poop, and fully ſtretch the ſails.
There anchor'd veſſels ſafe in harbour lye,
Whilſt limpid ſprings the failing caſk ſupply.
And now the twentieth ſun deſcending, laves
His glowing axle in the weſtern waves;
Still with expanded ſails we court in vain
Propitious winds, to waft us o'er the main:
And the pale mariner at once deplores
His drooping vigour, and exhauſted ſtores.
When lo! a bright cœrulean form appears,
The fair *Eidothea!* to diſpel my fears;

does not mean that *Homer* was ignorant of the mouths of *Nile* from his ſilence, but becauſe he places *Pharos* at the diſtance of a whole day's ſail from the Continent. The only way to unite this inconſiſtence is to ſuppoſe, that the Poet intended to ſpecify the *Peluſiac* mouth of *Nile*, from which *Pharos* ſtands about a day's ſail: but this is ſubmitted to the Critics.

I cannot tell whether one ſhould venture to make uſe of the word *Nile* in the tranſlation, it is doubtleſs an Anachroniſm; that name being unknown in the times of *Homer* and *Menelaus*, when the *Nile* was called *Ægyptus*. *Homer* in this very book

——— Αἰγύπτοιο Διὶ πιτνὸς ποταμοῖο.

Yet on the other hand, this name of *Ægyptus* is ſo little known, that a common Reader would ſcarce diſtinguiſh the river from the country; and indeed univerſal cuſtom has obtained for uſing the *Latin* name inſtead of the *Grecian*, in many other inſtances which are equally Anachroniſms: Witneſs all the names of the Gods and Goddeſſes throughout *Homer*; *Jupiter* for *Zeus*, *Juno* for *Erè*, *Neptune* for *Poſidaon*, &c.

Proteus her ſire divine. With pity preſs'd,
Me ſole the daughter of the deep addreſs'd;
What time, with hunger pin'd, my abſent mates
Roam the wild Iſle in ſearch of rural cates,
Bait the barb'd ſteel, and from the fiſhy flood
Appeaſe th' afflictive fierce deſire of food.
Whoe'er thou art, (the azure Goddeſs cries)
Thy conduct ill deſerves the praiſe of wiſe:
Is death thy choice, or miſery thy boaſt,
That here inglorious on a barren coaſt
Thy brave aſſociates droop, a meagre train
With famine pale, and aſk thy care in vain?
Struck with the kind reproach, I ſtrait reply;
Whate'er thy title in thy native ſky,

V. 499. *Bait the barb'd ſteel, and from the fiſhy flood.*] *Menelaus* ſays, hunger was ſo violent among his companions, that they were compelled to eat fiſh. *Plutarch* in his *Sympoſiacs* obſerves, that among the *Ægyptians*, *Syrians* and *Greeks*, to abſtain from fiſh was eſteemed a piece of ſanctity; that though the *Greeks* were encamped upon the *Helleſpont*, there is not the leaſt intimation that they eat fiſh, or any ſea proviſion; and that the companions of *Ulyſſes*, in the twelfth book of the *Odyſſey*, never ſought for fiſh till all their other proviſions were conſumed, and that the ſame neceſſity compelled them to eat the herds of the Sun which induced them to taſte fiſh. No fiſh is ever offered in ſacrifice: The *Pythagoreans* in particular command fiſh not to be eaten more ſtrictly than any other animal: Fiſh afford no excuſe at all for their deſtruction, they live as it were in another world, diſturb not our air, conſume not our fruits, or injure the waters; and therefore the *Pythagoreans*, who were unwilling to offer violence to any animals, fed very little, or not at all on fiſhes. I thought it neceſſary to inſert this from *Plutarch*, becauſe it is an obſervation that explains other paſſages in the ſequel of the *Odyſſey*.

A Goddeſs

A Goddeſs ſure! for more than mortal grace
Speaks thee deſcendent of ætherial race:
Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains;
Some heav'nly pow'r averſe my ſtay conſtrains:
O, piteous of my fate, vouchſafe to ſhew,
(For what's ſequeſter'd from celeſtial view?)
What pow'r becalms th' innavigable ſeas?
What guilt provokes him, and what vows appeaſe?
I ceas'd, when affable the Goddeſs cry'd;
Obſerve, and in the truths I ſpeak confide:
Th' oraculous Seer frequents the *Pharian* coaſt,
From whoſe high bed my birth divine I boaſt:
Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main,
The delegate of *Neptune*'s watry reign.

Watch

V. 521. Proteus, *a name tremendous o'er the main.*] *Euſtathius* enumerates various opinions concerning *Proteus*; ſome underſtand *Proteus* allegorically to ſignify the firſt matter which undergoes all changes; others make him an emblem of true friendſhip, which ought not to be ſettled till it has been tried in all ſhapes: others make *Proteus* a picture of a flatterer, who takes up all ſhapes, and ſuits himſelf to all forms, in compliance to the temper of the perſon whom he courts. The *Greeks* (obſerves *Diodorus*) imagined all theſe metamorphoſes of *Proteus* to have been borrowed from the practices of the *Ægyptian* Kings, who were accuſtomed to wear the figures of Lions, Bulls or Dragons in their diadems, as emblems of Royalty, and ſometimes that of Trees, *&c.* not ſo much for ornament as terror. Others took *Proteus* to be an enchanter; and *Euſtathius* recounts ſeveral that were eminent in this art, as *Cratiſthenes* the *Phliaſian* (which *Dacier* renders by miſtake *Calliſthenes* the *Phyſician*) who when he pleaſed could appear all on fire, and aſſume other appearances to the aſtoniſhment of the ſpectators: ſuch alſo was *Xenophon*, *Scymnus* of *Tarentum*, *Philippides* of *Syracuſe*, *Heraclitus* of *Mitylene*, and *Nymphodorus*, all practiſers of magical arts; and *Euſtathius*

Watch with inſidious care his known abode;
There faſt in chains conſtrain the various God:
Who bound, obedient to ſuperior force,
Unerring will preſcribe your deſtin'd courſe.
If ſtudious of your realms, you then demand
Their ſtate, ſince laſt you left your natal land;
Inſtant the God obſequious will diſcloſe
Bright tracks of glory, or a cloud of woes.
She ceas'd, and ſuppliant thus I made reply;
O Goddeſs! on thy aid my hopes rely:
Dictate propitious to my duteous ear,
What arts can captivate the changeful Seer?
For perilous th' aſſay, unheard the toil,
T' elude the preſcience of a God by guile.
Thus to the Goddeſs mild my ſuit I end.
Then ſhe. Obedient to my rule, attend:

Jamblichus recites that the *Phocæ* were made uſe of in their incantations. Some write that *Proteus* was an *Ægyptian* tumbler, who could throw himſelf into variety of figures and poſtures; others, a Stage-player; others, that he was a great General, ſkilled in all the arts and ſtratagems of war: *Dacier* looks upon him to have been an enchanter, or Θαυματοποιὸς. It is certain from *Herodotus*, that there was in the times of *Menelaus* a King named *Proteus*, who reigned in *Memphis*; that *Ægypt* was always remarkable for thoſe who excelled in magical arts; thus *Jannes* and *Jambres* changed, at leaſt in appearance, a rod into a Serpent, and water into blood: It is not therefore improbable but that *Menelaus*, hearing of him while he was in *Ægypt*, went to conſult him as an Enchanter, which kind of men always pretended to foreknow events: This perhaps was the real foundation of the whole ſtory concerning *Proteus*; the reſt is the fiction and embelliſhment of the Poet, who aſcribes to his *Proteus* whatever the credulity of men uſually aſcribes to Enchanters.

When

When thro' the Zone of heav'n the mounted ſun
Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run;
The Seer, while Zephyrs curl the ſwelling deep,
Baſks on the breezy ſhore, in grateful ſleep,
His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,
The *Phocæ* ſwift ſurround his rocky cave,
Frequent and full; the conſecrated train
Of * her, whoſe azure trident awes the main:
There wallowing warm, th' enormous herd exhales
An oily ſteam, and taints the noon-tide gales.
To that receſs, commodious for ſurprize,
When purple light ſhall next ſuffuſe the ſkies,
With me repair; and from thy warrior band
Three choſen chiefs of dauntleſs ſoul command:
Let their auxiliar force befriend the toil,
For ſtrong the God, and perfected in guile.
Stretch'd on the ſhelly ſhore, he firſt ſurveys
The flouncing herd aſcending from the ſeas;
Their number ſumm'd, repos'd in ſleep profound
The ſcaly charge their guardian God ſurround:
So with his batt'ning flocks the careful ſwain
Abides, pavilion'd on the graſſy plain.
With pow'rs united, obſtinately bold
Invade him, couch'd amid the ſcaly fold:

* *Amphitrite.*

Inſtant

Inſtant he wears, eluſive of the rape,
The mimic force of ev'ry ſavage ſhape:
Or glides with liquid lapſe a murm'ring ſtream,
Or wrapt in flame, he glows at ev'ry limb.
Yet ſtill retentive, with redoubled might
Thro' each vain paſſive form conſtrain his flight.
But when, his native ſhape reſum'd, he ſtands
Patient of conqueſt, and your cauſe demands;
The cauſe that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
And ſooth the vanquiſh'd with a victor's pray'r.
The bands relax'd, implore the Seer to ſay
What Godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
Who ſtrait propitious, in prophetic ſtrain
Will teach you to repaſs th' unmeaſur'd main.
She ceas'd, and bounding from the ſhelfy ſhore,
Round the deſcending nymph the waves redounding roar.
High rapt in wonder of the future deed,
With joy impetuous, to the port I ſpeed:
The wants of nature with repaſt ſuffice,
Till night with grateful ſhade involv'd the ſkies,
And ſhed ambroſial dews. Faſt by the deep,
Along the tented ſhore, in balmy ſleep,

V. 569. *But when, his native ſhape reſum'd*, &c.] This is founded upon the practice of Enchanters, who never give their anſwers, till they have aſtoniſhed the imagination of thoſe who conſult them with their juggling deluſions. *Dacier.*

Our

Our cares were loſt. When o'er the eaſtern lawn,
In ſaffron robes the daughter of the dawn
Advanc'd her roſy ſteps; before the bay,
Due ritual honours to the Gods I pay;
Then ſeek the place the ſea-born nymph aſſign'd,
With three aſſociates of undaunted mind,
Arriv'd, to form along th' appointed ſtrand
For each a bed, ſhe ſcoops the hilly ſand:
Then from her azure car, the finny ſpoils
Of four vaſt *Phocæ* takes, to veil her wiles:
Beneath the finny ſpoils extended prone,
Hard toil! the prophet's piercing eye to ſhun;
New from the corſe, the ſcaly frauds diffuſe
Unſavoury ſtench of oil, and brackiſh ooze:
But the bright ſea-maid's gentle pow'r implor'd,
With nectar'd drops the ſick'ning ſenſe reſtor'd.
Thus till the ſun had travell'd half the ſkies,
Ambuſh'd we lie, and wait the bold empriſe:
When thronging quick to baſk in open air,
The flocks of Ocean to the ſtrand repair:
Couch'd on the ſunny ſand, the monſters ſleep:
Then *Proteus* mounting from the hoary deep,
Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit:
(In order told, we make the ſum compleat.)
Pleas'd with the falſe review, ſecure he lies,
And leaden ſlumbers preſs his drooping eyes.

Ruſhing

Ruſhing impetuous forth, we ſtrait prepare
A furious onſet with the ſound of war,
And ſhouting ſeize the God: our force t' evade
His various arts he ſoon reſumes in aid:
A Lion now, he curls a ſurgy mane;
Sudden, our bands a ſpotted Pard reſtrain;
Then arm'd with tuſks, and lightning in his eyes,
A Boar's obſcener ſhape the God belies:
On ſpiry volumes there a Dragon rides;
Here, from our ſtrict embrace a Stream he glides:
And laſt, ſublime his ſtately growth he rears,
A Tree, and well-diſſembled foliage wears.
Vain efforts! with ſuperior pow'r compreſs'd,
Me with reluctance thus the Seer addreſs'd.
Say, ſon of *Atreus*, ſay what God inſpir'd
This daring fraud, and what the boon deſir'd?

V. 613. *And ſhouting ſeize the God.*——] *Proteus* has, through the whole ſtory, been deſcribed as a God who knew all things; it may then be aſked, how comes it that he did not foreknow the violence that was deſigned againſt his own perſon? and is it not a contradiction, that he who knew *Menelaus* without information, ſhould not know that he lay in ambuſh to ſeize him? The only anſwer that occurs to me is, that theſe enchanters never pretend to have an inherent fore-knowledge of events, but learn things by magical arts, and by recourſe to the ſecrets of their profeſſion; ſo that *Proteus* having no ſuſpicion, had not conſulted his art, and conſequently might be ſurprized by *Menelaus*: So far is agreeable to the pretenſions of ſuch deluders: The Poet indeed has drawn him in colours ſtronger than life; but Poetry adds or detracts at pleaſure, and is allowed frequently to ſtep out of the way, to bring a foreign ornament into the ſtory.

I thus;

I thus; O thou, whoſe certain eye foreſees
The fix'd event of Fate's remote decrees;
After long woes, and various toil endur'd,
Still on this deſert Iſle my fleet is moor'd;
Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing! ſay,
What Godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
What vows repentant will the Pow'r appeaſe,
To ſpeed a proſp'rous voyage o'er the ſeas?
To *Jove* (with ſtern regard the God replies)
And all th' offended ſynod of the ſkies,
Juſt hecatombs with due devotion ſlain,
Thy guilt abſolv'd, a proſp'rous voyage gain.
To the firm ſanction of thy fate attend!
An exile thou, nor cheering face of friend,
Nor ſight of natal ſhore, nor regal dome
Shalt yet enjoy, but ſtill art doom'd to roam.
Once more the *Nile*, who from the ſecret ſource
Of *Jove*'s high ſeat deſcends with ſweepy force,

Muſt

V. 635. *To* Jove——*juſt Hecatombs*——, &c.] *Homer* continually inculcates morality, and piety to the Gods; he gives in this place a great inſtance of the neceſſity of it. *Menelaus* cannot ſucceed in any of his actions, till he pays due honours to the Gods; the neglect of ſacrifice is the occaſion of all his calamity, and the performance of it opens a way to all his future proſperity.

V. 643. ——Nile, *who from the ſecret ſource*
Of Jove's *high ſeat deſcends*——]

Homer, it muſt be confeſſed, gives the epithet Διοτρεφης generally to all rivers; if he had uſed it here peculiarly, there might have been

Muſt view his billows white beneath thy oar,
And altars blaze along his ſanguine ſhore.
Then will the Gods, with holy pomp ador'd,
To thy long vows a ſafe return accord.
He ceas'd: heart-wounded with afflictive pain,
(Doom'd to repeat the perils of the main,
A ſhelfy tract, and long!) O Seer, I cry,
To the ſtern ſanction of th' offended ſky
My prompt obedience bows. But deign to ſay,
What fate propitious, or what dire diſmay
Suſtain thoſe Peers, the reliques of our hoſt,
Whom I with *Neſtor* on the *Phrygian* coaſt
Embracing left? Muſt I the warriors weep,
Whelm'd in the bottom of the monſtrous deep?
Or did the kind domeſtic friend deplore
The breathleſs heroes on their native ſhore?
Preſs not too far, reply'd the God; but ceaſe
To know, what known will violate thy peace:

been room to have imagined that he had been acquainted with the true cauſe of the inundations of this famous river: The word Διϊπετὴς implies it: For it is now generally agreed, that theſe prodigious inundations proceed from the vaſt rains and the melting of the ſnows on the mountains of the Moon in *Æthiopia*, about the autumnal Æquinox; when thoſe rains begin to fall, the river by degrees increaſes, and as they abate, it decreaſes; the word Διϊπετὴς is therefore peculiarly proper when applied to the *Nile*; for though all rivers depend upon the waters that fall from the air, or ἐκ Διὸς, yet the *Nile* more eſpecially; for when the rain ceaſes, the *Nile* conſiſts only of ſeven empty channels.

Too

Too curious of their doom! with friendly woe
Thy breaſt will heave, and tears eternal flow.
Part live! the reſt, a lamentable train!
Range the dark bounds of *Pluto*'s dreary reign.
Two, foremoſt in the roll of *Mars* renown'd,
Whoſe arms with conqueſt in thy cauſe were crown'd,
Fell by diſaſtrous fate; by tempeſts toſt,
A third lives wretched on a diſtant coaſt.
By *Neptune* reſcu'd from *Minerva*'s hate,
On *Gyræ*, ſafe *Oilean Ajax* ſate,
His ſhip o'erwhelm'd; but frowning on the floods,
Impious he roar'd defiance to the Gods;
To his own proweſs all the glory gave,
The pow'r defrauding who vouchſaf'd to ſave.
This heard the raging Ruler of the main;
His ſpear, indignant for ſuch high diſdain,
He launch'd; dividing with his forky mace
Th' aerial ſummit from the marble baſe:
The rock ruſh'd ſea-ward, with impetuous roar
Ingulf'd, and to th' abyſs the boaſter bore.

By

V. 682. ——*And to th' abyſs the boaſter bore.*] It is in the original, *He dy'd, having drunk the ſalt water.* This verſe has been omitted in many editions of *Homer*; and the Ancients, ſays *Euſtathius*, blame *Ariſtarchus* for not marking it as a verſe that ought to be rejected; the ſimplicity of it conſiſts in the ſenſe, more than in the terms, and it is unworthy of *Proteus* to treat the death of *Ajax* with pleaſantry, as he ſeems to do, by adding *having drunk ſalt water*: But why may not *Proteus* be ſuppoſed to be ſerious, and the

By *Juno*'s guardian aid, the wat'ry Vaſt
Secure of ſtorms, your Royal brother paſt:
Till coaſting nigh the Cape, where *Malea* ſhrowds
Her ſpiry cliffs amid ſurrounding clouds;
A whirling guſt tumultuous from the ſhore,
Acroſs the deep his lab'ring veſſel bore,
In an ill-fated hour the coaſt he gain'd,
Where late in regal pomp *Thyeſtes* reign'd;
But when his hoary honours bow'd to fate,
Ægyſthus govern'd in paternal ſtate.
The ſurges now ſubſide, the tempeſt ends;
From his tall ſhip the King of men deſcends:
There fondly thinks the Gods conclude his toil!
Far from his own domain ſalutes the ſoil:
With rapture oft the verge of *Greece* reviews,
And the dear turf with tears of joy bedews.
Him thus exulting on the diſtant ſtrand,
A Spy diſtinguiſh'd from his airy ſtand;
To bribe whoſe vigilance, *Ægyſthus* told
A mighty ſum of ill perſuading gold:

the term Ἁλμυρὸν ὕδωρ, to imply no more than that he was drowned in the waves of the ocean? I know only one reaſon that can give any colour to the objection, *viz.* its being poſſibly become a vulgar expreſſion, and uſed commonly in a ludicrous ſenſe; then indeed it is to be avoided in Poetry, but it does not follow, becauſe perhaps it might be uſed in this manner in the days of theſe Critics, that therefore it was ſo uſed in the days of *Homer*. What was poetical in the time of the Poet, might be grown vulgar in the time of the Critics.

There

There watch'd this guardian of his guilty fear,
Till the twelfth moon had wheel'd her pale career;
And now admoniſh'd by his eye, to court
With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
Of deathful arts expert, his Lord employs
The miniſters of blood in dark ſurprize:
And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
Cloſe ambuſh'd nigh the ſpacious hall he plac'd.
Then bids prepare the hoſpitable treat:
Vain ſhews of love to veil his felon hate!
To grace the victor's welcome from the wars,
A train of courſers, and triumphal cars
Magnificent he leads: the Royal gueſt
Thoughtleſs of ill, accepts the fraudful feaſt.
The troop forth iſſuing from the dark receſs,
With homicidal rage the King oppreſs!
So, whilſt he feeds luxurious in the ſtall,
The ſov'reign of the herd is doom'd to fall.
The partners of his fame and toils at *Troy*,
Around their Lord, a mighty ruin! lie:

V. 719. *So, whilſt he feeds luxurious in the ſtall, &c.*] *Dacier* tranſlates βῦν, by *taureau*, a bull; and miſunderſtands *Euſtathius*, who directly ſays, that in the ſecond *Iliad* the Poet compares *Agamemnon* to a bull, in this place to an ox, ταύρῳ εἴκασεν νῦν δὲ βοὶ αὐτὸν ὡμοίωσεν. The one was undoubtedly deſigned to deſcribe the courage and majeſtic port of a warrior, the other to give us an image of a Prince falling in full peace and plenty, ὡς βῦν ἐπὶ φάτνῃ.

Mix'd

Mix'd with the brave, the baſe invaders bleed;
Ægyſthus ſole ſurvives to boaſt the deed.
He ſaid; chill horrors ſhook my ſhiv'ring ſoul,
Rack'd with convulſive pangs in duſt I roll;
And hate, in madneſs of extreme deſpair,
To view the ſun, or breath the vital air.
But when ſuperior to the rage of woe,
I ſtood reſtor'd, and tears had ceas'd to flow;
Lenient of grief, the pitying God began——
Forget the brother and reſume the man:
To Fate's ſupreme diſpoſe the dead reſign,
That care be Fate's, a ſpeedy paſſage thine.
Still lives the wretch who wrought the death deplor'd,
But lives a victim for thy vengeful ſword;
Unleſs with filial rage *Oreſtes* glow,
And ſwift prevent the meditated blow:
You timely will return a welcome gueſt,
With him to ſhare the ſad funereal feaſt.
He ſaid: new thoughts my beating heart employ,
My gloomy ſoul receives a gleam of joy.
Fair hope revives; and eager I addreſt
The preſcient Godhead to reveal the reſt.
The doom decreed of thoſe diſaſtrous Two
I've heard with pain, but oh! the tale purſue;
What third brave ſon of *Mars* the Fates conſtrain
To roam the howling deſart of the main:

Or in eternal ſhade if cold he lies,
Provoke new ſorrow from theſe grateful eyes.
That

V. 749. *Or in eternal ſhade if cold he lies.*] *Proteus* in the beginning of his Relation had ſaid, that *one perſon was alive, and remain'd enclos'd by the ocean:* How then comes *Menelaus* here to ſay, Give me an account of that other perſon who is alive, or *dead?* Perhaps the ſorrow which *Menelaus* conceiv'd for his friend *Ulyſſes*, might make him fear the worſt; and *Proteus* adding, *encloſed by the ocean*, might give a ſuſpicion that he was dead, the words being capable of ambiguity. However this be, it ſets the friendſhip of *Menelaus* in a ſtrong light: where friendſhip is ſincere, a ſtate of uncertainty is a ſtate of fears, we dread even poſſibilities, and give them an imaginary certainty. Upon this, one of the fineſt compliments that a Poet ever made to a patron turns, that of *Horace* to *Mecænas*, in the firſt of the *Epodes*.

It may not perhaps be diſagreeable to the Reader to obſerve, that *Virgil* has borrowed this ſtory of *Proteus* from *Homer*, and tranſlated it almoſt literally. *Rapine* ſays, that *Homer*'s deſcription is more ingenious and fuller of invention, but *Virgil*'s more judicious. I wiſh that Critic had given his reaſons for his opinion. I believe in general, the plan of the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey* is allowed by the beſt of Critics to be more perfect than that of the *Æneis*. *Homer*, with reſpect to the unity of time, has the advantage very manifeſtly: *Rapine* confeſſes it, and *Ariſtotle* propoſes him as an example to all Epic Authors. Where then is the ſuperiority of judgment? Is it that there are more fabulous, I mean incredible, ſtories in *Homer* than *Virgil?* as that of the *Cyclops*, the ſhips of *Alcinous*, &c. *Virgil* has imitated moſt of theſe bold fables, and the ſtory of the ſhips of *Alcinous* is not more incredible than the transformation of the ſhips of *Æneas*. But this is too large a ſubject to be diſcuſſed in the compaſs of theſe Annotations. In particular paſſages I freely allow the preference to *Virgil*, as in the deſcent of *Æneas* into hell, &c. but in this ſtory of *Proteus*, I cannot ſee any ſuperiority of judgment. *Virgil* is little more than a tranſlator; to ſhew the particulars would be too tedious: I refer it to the Reader to compare the two Authors, and ſhall only inſtance in one paſſage.

Ἡμεῖς δ' αἰψ' ἐάχοντες ἐπισσύμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ χεῖρας,
Βάλλομεν. ὧδ' ὁ γέρων δολίης ἐπιλήθετο τέχνης,
Ἀλλ' ἤτοι πρώτιστα λέων γένετ' ἠϋγένειος

Αὐτὰρ

That chief (rejoin'd the God) his race derives
From *Ithaca*, and wond'rous woes ſurvives;
Laertes' ſon: girt with circumfluous tides,
He ſtill calamitous conſtraint abides.
Him in *Calypſo*'s cave of late I view'd,
When ſtreaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
But vain his pray'r, his arts are vain to move
Th' enamour'd Goddeſs, or elude her love:
His veſſel ſunk, and dear companions loſt,
He lives reluctant on a foreign coaſt.
But oh belov'd by heav'n! reſerv'd to thee
A happier lot the ſmiling Fates decree:
Free from that law, beneath whoſe mortal ſway
Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay;

Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων, καὶ παρδαλις ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς,
Γίνετο δ' ὑγρὸν ὕδωρ, καὶ δένδρεον ὑψιπέτηλον, &c.

Cum clamore ruit magno, manicisque jacentem
Occupat: ille ſuæ contra non immemor artis,
Omnia tranſformat ſeſe in miracula rerum,
Ignemque, horribilemque feram, fluviumque liquentem, &c.

Homer has a manifeſt advantage in the occaſion of the ſtory: The loſs of a few bees ſeems to be a cauſe too trivial for an undertaking ſo great as the ſurprize of a Deity: whereas the whole happineſs of *Menelaus* depends upon this conſultation of *Proteus*: This is a far more important cauſe, and conſequently in this reſpect ſomething more is due to *Homer* than the ſole honour of an inventor.

Elyſium

Elyſium ſhall be thine; the bliſsful plains
Of utmoſt earth, where *Rhadamanthus* reigns.
Joys ever-young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year:
Stern winter ſmiles on that auſpicious clime:
The fields are florid with unfading prime:
From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mold the round hail, or flake the fleecy ſnow;
But from the breezy deep the Bleſt inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the weſtern gale.
This grace peculiar will the Gods afford
To thee the ſon of *Jove*, and beauteous *Helen*'s Lord.
He ceas'd, and plunging in the vaſt profound,
Beneath the God the whirling billows bound.

V. 765. Elyſium *ſhall be thine; the bliſsful plains Of utmoſt earth*, &c.]

This is the only place in which the *Elyſian* field is mentioned in *Homer*. The conjectures of the Ancients are very various about it: *Plato* in his *Phæd.* places it in *cælo ſtellato*, or the region of the Stars; but ſince *Homer* fixes it εἰς πείρατα γαίης, or (as *Milton* expreſſes it) at the *earth's green end*, I will paſs over the conjectures of others, eſpecially ſince the μακάρων Νῆσοι, by which others expreſs *Elyſium*, confines it to this world.

Strabo, ſays *Euſtathius*, places it not far from *Mauruſia*, that lies near the Streights: It is ſuppoſed by *Bochart*, as *Dacier* obſerves, that the fable is of *Phœnican* extraction, that *Alizuth* in *Hebrew* ſignifies *joy* or *exultation*, which word the *Greeks*, adapting to their way of pronunciation, call'd *Elyſius*. If this be true, I ſhould come into an opinion that has much prevailed, that the *Greeks* had heard of *Paradiſe* from the *Hebrews*; and that the *Hebrews* deſcribing *Paradiſe* as a place of *Alizuth*, or *joy*, gave occaſion to all the fables of the *Grecian Elyſium*.

Then ſpeeding back, involv'd in various thought,
My friends attending at the ſhore I ſought.
Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we controll,
Till night with ſilent ſhade inveſts the pole;
Then loſe the cares of life in pleaſing reſt.——
Soon as the morn reveals the roſeate Eaſt,
With ſails we wing the maſts, our anchors weigh,
Unmoor the fleet, and ruſh into the ſea.
Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
Then ſteering backward from the *Pharian* Iſle,
We gain the ſtream of *Jove*-deſcended *Nile:*
There quit the ſhips, and on the deſtin'd ſhore
With ritual hecatombs the Gods adore:
Their wrath aton'd, to *Agamemnon*'s name
A Cenotaph I raiſe of deathleſs fame.
Theſe rites to piety and grief diſcharg'd,
The friendly Gods a ſpringing gale inlarg'd:
The fleet ſwift tilting o'er the ſurges flew,
Till *Grecian* cliffs appear'd a bliſsful view!
Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
A ſtory, fruitful of diſaſtrous fate:
And now, young Prince, indulge my fond requeſt;
Be *Sparta* honour'd with his royal gueſt,
Till from his eaſtern goal, the joyous ſun
His twelfth diurnal race begins to run.

Mean

Mean-time my train the friendly gifts prepare,
Three ſprightly courſers, and a poliſh'd car:
With theſe, a goblet of capacious mold,
Figur'd with art to dignify the gold,
(Form'd for libation to the Gods) ſhall prove
A pledge and monument of ſacred love.
My quick return, young *Ithacus* rejoin'd,
Damps the warm wiſhes of my raptur'd mind:
Did not my fate my needful haſte conſtrain,
Charm'd by your ſpeech, ſo graceful and humane,
Loſt in delight the circling year would roll,
While deep attention fix'd my liſt'ning ſoul.
But now to *Pyle* permit my deſtin'd way,
My lov'd aſſociates chide my long delay:
In dear remembrance of your royal grace,
I take the preſent of the promis'd Vaſe;
The courſers for the champian ſports, retain;
That gift our barren rocks will render vain:

Horrid

V. 806. *Three ſprightly courſers.*] How comes it to paſs that *Menelaus* proffers three horſes to *Telemachus?* This was a compleat ſet among the Ancients, they uſed one Pole-horſe and two leaders. *Euſt.*

V. 822. *That gift our barren rocks will render vain.*] This paſſage where *Telemachus* refuſes the horſes has been much obſerv'd, and turned to a moral ſenſe, *viz.* as a leſſon to men to deſire nothing but what is ſuitable to their conditions. *Horace* has introduced it into his Epiſtles,

Haud malè Telemachus proles patientis Ulyſſei;
Non eſt aptus equis Ithacæ locus, ut neque planis
Porrectus ſpaciis, nec multæ prodigus herbæ:
Atride, magis apta tibi tua dona relinquam.

Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browze,
But neither mead nor plain ſupplies, to feed
The ſprightly courſer, or indulge his ſpeed:
To ſea-ſurrounded realms the Gods aſſign
Small tract of fertile lawn, the leaſt to mine.
His hand the King with tender paſſion preſs'd,
And ſmiling thus, the royal youth addreſs'd:

This is the reaſon why *Ulyſſes* (as *Euſtathius* obſerves upon the 10th of the *Iliads*) leaves the horſes of *Rheſus* to the diſpoſal of *Diomedes*; ſo that the ſame ſpirit of Wiſdom reign'd in *Telemachus*, that was ſo remarkable in *Ulyſſes*. This is the reaſon why *Menelaus* ſmil'd; it was not at the frankneſs or ſimplicity of *Telemachus*, but it was a ſmile of joy, to ſee the young Prince inherit his father's wiſdom.

It is the remark of *Euſtathius*, that *Telemachus* is far from exalting the nature of his country; he confeſſes it to be barren, and more barren than the neighbouring Iſlands; yet that natural and laudable affection which all worthy perſons have for their country, makes him prefer it to places of a more happy ſituation. This appears to me a replication to what *Menelaus* had before offered concerning the tranſplantation of *Ulyſſes* to *Sparta*; this is contained in ἱπποβότοιο; and then the meaning is, 'Tis true *Ithaca* is a barren region, yet more deſireable than this country of *Lacedæmon*, this ἱπποβότος γαῖα. It is the more probable from the offer of horſes which *Menelaus* had then made, and is alſo another reaſon for the ſmile of *Menelaus*.

Euſtathius remarks that *Menelaus*, tho' he has expreſſed the greateſt friendſhip for *Ulyſſes*, yet makes no offer to reſtore the fortunes of his friend by any military aſſiſtance; though he had a moſt fair opportunity given him to repay the paſt kindneſs of *Ulyſſes* to his wife *Penelope* and his ſon *Telemachus*; and how comes *Telemachus* not to aſk it either of *Neſtor* or *Menelaus*? He anſwers, that this depended upon the uncertainty they were yet under, concerning the life of *Ulyſſes*. But the truer reaſon in my opinion is, that the nature of Epic Poetry requires a contrary conduct: The Hero of the Poem is to be the chief agent, and the re-eſtabliſhment of his fortunes muſt be owing to his own wiſdom and valour. I have enlarged upon this already, ſo that there is no occaſion in this place to inſiſt upon it.

O early

O early worth! a ſoul ſo wiſe, and young,
Proclaims you from the ſage *Ulyſſes* ſprung.
Selected from my ſtores, of matchleſs price
An urn ſhall recompence your prudent choice:
Not mean the maſſy mold, of ſilver grac'd
By *Vulcan*'s art, the verge with gold enchas'd:
A pledge the ſcepter'd pow'r of *Sidon* gave,
When to his realm I plow'd the orient wave.
Thus they alternate; while with artful care
The menial train the regal feaſt prepare:
The firſtlings of the flock are doom'd to dye;
Rich fragrant wines the cheering bowl ſupply;
A female band the gift of *Ceres* bring;
And the gilt roofs with genial triumph ring.
Mean while, in *Ithaca*, the Suitor-pow'rs
In active games divide their jovial hours:
In *Areas* vary'd with moſaic art,
Some whirl the diſk, and ſome the jav'lin dart.
Aſide, ſequeſter'd from the vaſt reſort,
Antinous ſat ſpectator of the ſport;
With great *Eurymachus*, of worth confeſt,
And high deſcent, ſuperior to the reſt;
Whom young *Noëmon* lowly thus addreſt.
My ſhip equipp'd within the neighb'ring port,
The Prince, departing for the *Pylian* court,
Requeſted for his ſpeed; but courteous, ſay
When ſteers he home, or why this long delay?

For *Elis* I ſhould ſail with utmoſt ſpeed,
T'import twelve mares which there luxurious feed,
And twelve young mules, a ſtrong laborious race,
New to the plow, unpractis'd in the trace.
Unknowing of the courſe to *Pyle* deſign'd,
A ſudden horror ſeiz'd on either mind:
The Prince in rural bow'r they fondly thought,
Numb'ring his flocks and herds, not far remote.
Relate, *Antinous* cries, devoid of guile,
When ſpread the Prince his ſail for diſtant *Pyle?*
Did choſen chiefs acroſs the gulphy main
Attend his voyage, or domeſtic train?
Spontaneous did you ſpeed his ſecret courſe,
Or was the veſſel ſeiz'd by fraud or force?
With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
(*Noëmon* cry'd) the veſſel was reſign'd.
Who in the balance, with the great affairs
Of courts preſume to weigh their private cares?
With him, the peerage next in pow'r to you:
And *Mentor*, captain of the lordly crew,
Or ſome Celeſtial in his rev'rend form,
Safe from the ſecret rock and adverſe ſtorm,
Pilots the courſe: For when the glimm'ring ray
Of yeſter dawn diſclos'd the tender day,
Mentor himſelf I ſaw, and much admir'd.——
Then ceas'd the Youth, and from the court retir'd.

Confounded

Confounded and appall'd, th' unfiniſh'd game
The Suitors quit, and all to council came:
Antinous firſt th' aſſembled Peers addreſt,
Rage ſparkling in his eyes, and burning in his breaſt.
O ſhame to manhood! ſhall one daring boy
The ſcheme of all our happineſs deſtroy?
Fly unperceiv'd, ſeducing half the flow'r
Of nobles, and invite a foreign pow'r?
The pond'rous engine rais'd to cruſh us all,
Recoiling, on his head is ſure to fall.
Inſtant prepare me, on the neighb'ring ſtrand,
With twenty choſen mates a veſſel mann'd;
For ambuſh'd cloſe beneath the *Samian* ſhore
His ſhip returning ſhall my ſpies explore:
He ſoon his raſhneſs ſhall with life attone,
Seek for his father's fate, but find his own.

V. 896. *For ambuſh'd cloſe*, &c.] We have here another uſe which the Poet makes of the voyage of *Telemachus*. *Euſtathius* remarks that theſe incidents not only diverſify but enliven the Poem. But it may be aſked why the Poet makes not uſe of ſo fair an opportunity to inſert a gallant action of *Telemachus*, and draw him not as eluding, but defeating his adverſaries? The anſwer is eaſy; That the Suitors ſailed compleatly armed, and *Telemachus* unprovided of any weapons: and therefore *Homer* conſults credibility, and forbears to paint his young Hero in the colours of a Knight in Romance, who upon all diſadvantages engages and defeats his oppoſers. But then to what purpoſe is this ambuſh of the Suitors, and what part of the deſign of the Poem is carried on by it? The very chief aim of it; To ſhew the ſufferings of *Ulyſſes*: He is unfortunate in all relations of life, as a King, as an huſband, and here very eminently as a father; theſe ſufferings are laid down in the propoſition of the *Odyſſey* as eſſential to the Poem, and conſequently this ambuſh laid by the Suitors againſt the life of *Telemachus* is an eſſential ornament.

With vaſt applauſe the ſentence all approve;
Then riſe, and to the feaſtful hall remove:
Swift to the Queen the Herald *Medon* ran,
Who heard the conſult of the dire Divan:
Before her dome the royal matron ſtands,
And thus the meſſage of his haſte demands.
What will the Suitors? muſt my ſervant train
Th' allotted labours of the day refrain,
For them to form ſome exquiſite repaſt?
Heav'n grant this feſtival may prove their laſt!
Or if they ſtill muſt live, from me remove
The double plague of luxury and love!

V. 906. *The ſpeech of* Penelope.] *Longinus* in particular commends this ſpeech as a true picture of a perſon that feels various emotions of ſoul, and is born by every guſt of paſſion from ſentiment to ſentiment with ſudden and unexpected tranſitions. There is ſome obſcurity in the *Greek*; this ariſes from the warmth with which ſhe ſpeaks, ſhe has not leiſure to explain herſelf fully, a circumſtance natural to a perſon in anger.

Penelope gives a very beautiful picture of *Ulyſſes*: "The beſt of "Princes are allowed to have their favorites, and give a greater "ſhare of affection than ordinary to particular perſons. But *Ulyſſes* "was a father to all his people alike, and loved them all as his "children; a father, though he bears a more tender affection to one "child than to another, yet ſhews them all an equal treatment; "thus alſo a good King is not ſwayed by inclination, but juſtice, "towards all his ſubjects. *Dacier.*

One circumſtance is very remarkable, and gives us a full view of a perſon in anger; at the very ſight of *Medon Penelope* flies out into paſſion, ſhe give him not time to ſpeak one ſyllable, but ſpeaks herſelf as if all the Suitors were preſent, and reproaches them in the perſon of *Medon*, though *Medon* is juſt to her and *Ulyſſes*; but anger is an undiſtinguiſhing paſſion. What ſhe ſays of ingratitude, recalls to my memory what is to be found in *Laertius*: *Ariſtotle* being aſked what thing upon earth ſooneſt grew old? replied *an obligation*. Τὶ τάχιστα γηράσκει; *reſpondit*, χάρις.

Forbear,

Forbear, ye ſons of inſolence! forbear,
In riot to conſume a wretched heir.
In the young ſoul illuſtrious thought to raiſe,
Were ye not tutor'd with *Ulyſſes'* praiſe?
Have not your fathers oft my Lord defin'd,
Gentle of ſpeech, beneficent of mind?
Some Kings with arbitrary rage devour,
Or in their Tyrant-Minions veſt the pow'r:
Ulyſſes let no partial favours fall,
The people's parent, he protected all:
But abſent now, perfidious and ingrate!
His ſtores ye ravage, and uſurp his ſtate.
He thus; O were the woes you ſpeak the worſt!
They form a deed more odious and accurſt;
More dreadful than your boding ſoul divines:
But pitying *Jove* avert the dire deſigns!
The darling object of your royal care
Is mark'd to periſh in a deathful ſnare;
Before he anchors in his native port,
From *Pyle* re-ſailing and the *Spartan* court,
Horrid to ſpeak? in ambuſh is decreed
The hope and heir of *Ithaca* to bleed!
Sudden ſhe ſunk beneath the weighty woes,
The vital ſtreams a chilling horror froze:
The big round tear ſtands trembling in her eye,
And on her tongue imperfect accents dye.

At length, in tender language, interwove
With ſighs, ſhe thus expreſſed her anxious love.
Why raſhly wou'd my ſon his fate explore,
Ride the wild waves, and quit the ſafer ſhore?
Did he with all the greatly wretched, crave
A blank oblivion, and untimely grave!
'Tis not reply'd the Sage, to *Medon* giv'n
To know, if ſome inhabitant of heav'n,
In his young breaſt the daring thought inſpir'd;
Or if alone with filial duty fir'd,
The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
Studious to learn his abſent father's doom.
The Sage retir'd: Unable to controul
The mighty griefs that ſwell her lab'ring ſoul,
Rolling convulſive on the floor, is ſeen
The piteous object of a proſtrate Queen.
Words to her dumb complaint a pauſe ſupplies,
And breath, to waſte in unavailing cries.
Around their ſov'reign wept the menial fair,
To whom ſhe thus addreſs'd her deep deſpair.

V. 941. *Ride the wild waves* ——.] Were this paſſage to be rendered literally, it would run thus, *climb the ſwift ſhips, which are horſes to men on the ſeas.* *Euſtathius* obſerves the alluſion is very juſt, and that the only doubt is, whether it be brought in opportunely by *Penelope?* It may be doubted, if the mind could find leiſure to introduce ſuch alluſions? *Dacier* anſwers that *Penelope* ſpeaks thus thro' indignation: The grief that ſhe conceives at the hardineſs of men, in finding out a way to paſs the ſeas as well as land, furniſhed her with theſe figures very naturally; for figures are agreeable to paſſion.

Behold

Behold a wretch whom all the Gods conſign
To woe! Did ever ſorrows equal mine?
Long to my joys my deareſt Lord is loſt,
His country's buckler, and the *Grecian* boaſt:
Now from my fond embrace by tempeſts torn,
Our other column of the ſtate is born:
Nor took a kind adieu, nor ſought conſent! ——
Unkind confed'rates in his dire intent!
Ill ſuits it with your ſhews of duteous zeal,
From me the purpos'd voyage to conceal:
Tho' at the ſolemn midnight hour he roſe,
Why did you fear to trouble my repoſe?
He either had obey'd my fond deſire,
Or ſeen his mother pierc'd with grief expire.
Bid *Dolius* quick attend, the faithful ſlave
Whom to my nuptial train *Icarius* gave,
To attend the fruit groves: With inceſſant ſpeed
He ſhall this violence of death decreed,
To good *Laertes* tell. Experienc'd age
May timely intercept the ruffian rage,
Convene the tribes, the murd'rous plot reveal,
And to their pow'r to ſave his race appeal.
Then *Euryclea* thus. My deareſt dread!
Tho' to the ſword I bow this hoary head,
Or if a dungeon be the pain decreed,
I own me conſcious of th' unpleaſing deed:
Auxiliar to his flight, my aid implor'd,
With wine and viands I the veſſel ſtor'd:
A ſolemn oath impos'd the ſecret ſeal'd,
'Till the twelfth dawn the light of heav'n reveal'd.

Dreading th' effect of a fond mother's fear,
He dar'd not violate your royal ear.
But bathe, and in imperial robes array'd,
Pay due devotions to the * Martial maid,
And reſt affianc'd in her guardian aid.
Send not to good *Laertes*, nor engage
In toils of ſtate the miſeries of age:
'Tis impious to ſurmize, the pow'rs divine
To ruin doom the *Jove* deſcended line:
Long ſhall the race of juſt *Arceſius* reign,
And Iſles remote enlarge his old domain.
The Queen her ſpeech with calm attention hears,
Her eyes reſtrain the ſilver-ſtreaming tears:

990 * *Minerva.*

V. 998. *And Iſles remote enlarge his old domain.*] *Dacier* offers a Criticiſm upon theſe laſt words of *Euryclea:* It cannot be imagined theſe fertile fields can be ſpoken of *Ithaca*; *Plutarch*'s deſcription of it is intirely contradictory to this: "*Ithaca*, ſays he, is rough and "mountainous, fit only to breed goats; upon cultivation it ſcarce "yields any fruits, and theſe ſo worthleſs, as ſcarce to recompence "the labour of gathering." *Homer* therefore by this expreſſion intended the other dominions of *Ulyſſes*, ſuch as *Cephalenia*, &c.

But I queſtion not that the whole dominions of *Ulyſſes* are included, *Ithaca* as well as *Cephalenia*; for though *Ithaca* was mountainous, yet the vallies were fruitful, according to the deſcription of it in the 13th of the *Odyſſey*.

The rugged ſoil allows no level ſpace
For flying chariots, or the rapid race;
Yet not ungrateful to the Peaſant's pain,
Suffices fulneſs to the ſwelling grain:
The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
And cluſtring grapes afford a gen'rous juice, &c.

As for her remark upon ἀπόπροθι, it is of no validity; the word ſtands in oppoſition to Δώματα, and implies no more than *here*, or at a diſtance in general.

She

She bathes, and rob'd, the ſacred dome aſcends:
Her pious ſpeed a female train attends:
The ſalted cakes in caniſters are laid,
And thus the Queen invokes *Minerva*'s aid.
Daughter divine of *Jove*, whoſe arm can wield
Th' avenging bolt, and ſhake the dreadful ſhield!
If e'er *Ulyſſes* to thy fane preferr'd
The beſt and choiceſt of his flock and herd;
Hear, Goddeſs, hear, by thoſe oblations won;
And for the pious ſire preſerve the ſon:
His wiſh'd return with happy pow'r befriend,
And on the Suitors let thy wrath deſcend.
She ceas'd; ſhrill ecſtaſies of joy declare
The fav'ring Goddeſs preſent to the pray'r:
The Suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
A ſignal of her Hymenæal choice:

V. 1015. *The Suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice, A ſignal of her Hymenæal choice.*]

It may be aſked whence this conjecture of the Suitors ariſes? *Penelope* is deſcribed as weeping grievouſly, and fainting away, and yet immediately the Suitors conclude ſhe is preparing for the nuptials. *Euſtathius* anſwers, that undoubtedly the Suitors underſtood the Queen had purified herſelf with water, and ſupplicated the Goddeſs *Minerva*, though the Poet omits the relation of ſuch little particularities. But whence is it that the Poet gives a greater ſhare of wiſdom to *Euryclea* than to *Penelope*? *Penelope* commands a ſervant to fly with the news of the abſence of *Telemachus* to *Laertes*, which could not at all advantage *Telemachus*, and only grieve *Laertes*: *Euryclea* immediately diverts her from that vain intention, adviſes her to have recourſe to heaven, and not add miſery to the already miſerable *Laertes*; This is Wiſdom in *Euryclea*. But it muſt be confeſſed that the other is Nature in *Penelope*: *Euryclea* is calm, *Penelope* in a paſſion: and *Homer* would have been a very bad painter of human Nature, if he had drawn *Penelope*, thus heated with paſſion, in the mild temper of *Euryclea*; grief and reſentment give *Penelope* no time to deliberate, whereas *Euryclea* is leſs concerned, and conſequently capable of thinking with more tranquillity.

Whilſt

Whilſt one moſt jovial thus accoſts the board;
"Too late the Queen ſelects a ſecond lord:
"In evil hour the nuptial rite intends,
"When o'er her ſon diſaſtrous death impends."
Thus he unſkill'd of what the Fates provide!
But with ſevere rebuke *Antinous* cry'd.

Theſe empty vaunts will make the voyage vain;
Alarm not with diſcourſe the menial train:
The great event with ſilent hope attend;
Our deeds alone our council muſt commend.

His ſpeech thus ended ſhort, he frowning roſe,
And twenty chiefs renown'd for valour choſe:
Down to the ſtrand he ſpeeds with haughty ſtrides,
Where anchor'd in the bay the veſſel rides;
Replete with mail, and military ſtore,
In all her tackle trim, to quit the ſhore.
The deſp'rate crew aſcend, unfurl the ſails;
(The ſea ward prow invites the tardy gales)
Then take repaſt, 'till *Heſperus* diſplay'd
His golden circlet in the weſtern ſhade.

Mean-time the Queen without refection due,
Heart-wounded, to the bed of ſtate withdrew:
In her ſad breaſt the Prince's fortunes rowl,
And hope and doubt alternate ſeize her ſoul.

V. 1022. *With rebuke ſevere* Antinous *cry'd.*] *Antinous* ſpeaks thus in return to what had been before ſaid by one of the Suitors concerning *Telemachus, viz.* "the Queen little imagines that her "ſon's death approaches;" he fears leſt *Penelope* ſhould know their intentions, and hinder their meaſures by raiſing the ſubjects of *Ithaca* that ſtill retained their fidelity. *Dacier.*

So

So when the wood man's toil her cave ſurrounds,
And with the hunter's cry the grove reſounds;
With grief and rage the mother-lion ſtung,
Fearleſs herſelf, yet trembles for her young.
While penſive in the ſilent ſlumb'rous ſhade,
Sleep's gentle pow'rs her drooping eyes invade;
Minerva, life-like on imbody'd air,
Impreſs'd the form of *Iphthima* the fair:

V. 1041. *So when the wood-man's toyl*, &c,] The Poet, to ſhew the majeſty and high ſpirit of *Penelope*, compares her to a Lioneſs: He manages the alluſion very artfully: He deſcribes the Lioneſs not as exerting any dreadful acts of violence, (for ſuch a compariſon is only proper to be applied to a Hero) but incloſed by her enemies; which at once ſhews both her danger and nobleneſs of ſpirit under it: It is in the *Greek* δόλιον κύκλον, which may ſignify either a circle of toils or nets, or a circle of enemies: The former is perhaps preferable, as correſponding beſt with the condition of *Penelope*, who was ſurrounded with the ſecret ambuſhes and ſnares of the Suitors. *Euſtathius.*

V. 1047. Minerva, *life-like on imbody'd air,*
Impreſt the form, &c.

We have here an imaginary Being introduced by the Poet: the whole is managed with great judgment; it is ſhort, becauſe it has not a direct and immediate relation to the progreſs of the Poem, and becauſe ſuch imaginary entercourſes have ever been looked upon as ſudden in appearance, and as ſudden in vaniſhing away. The uſe the Poet makes of it, is to relieve *Penelope* from the extremity of deſpair, that ſhe may act her part in the future ſcenes with courage and conſtancy. We ſee it is *Minerva* who ſends this phantom to *Penelope* to comfort her: Now this is an allegory to expreſs that as ſoon as the violence of ſorrow was over, the mind of *Penelope* returned to ſome degree of tranquillity: *Minerva* is no more than the reſult of her own reflection and wiſdom, which baniſhed from her breaſt thoſe melancholy apprehenſions. The manner likewiſe of its introduction is not leſs judicious; the mind is apt to dwell upon thoſe objects in ſleep which make a deep impreſſion when awake: This is the foundation of the Poet's fiction; it is no more than a dream which he here deſcribes, but he cloaths it with a body, gives it a momentary exiſtence, and by this method exalts a low circumſtance into dignity and Poetry.

(*Icarius*,

(*Icarius*' daughter ſhe, whoſe blooming charms
Allur'd *Eumelus* to her virgin-arms;
A ſcepter'd Lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
Of *Theſſaly* wide ſtretch'd his ample reign:)
As *Pallas* will'd, along the ſable ſkies
To calm the Queen the Phantom-ſiſter flies.
Swift on the regal dome deſcending right,
The bolted Valves are pervious to her flight.
Cloſe to her head the pleaſing viſion ſtands,
And thus performs *Minerva*'s high commands.
O why, *Penelope*, this cauſeleſs fear,
To render ſleep's ſoft bleſſing unſincere?
Alike devout to ſorrow's dire extreme
The day reflection, and the midnight dream!
Thy ſon, the Gods propitious will reſtore,
And bid thee ceaſe his abſence to deplore.
To whom the Queen, (whilſt yet her penſive mind
Was in the ſilent gates of ſleep confin'd)
O ſiſter, to my ſoul for ever dear,
Why this firſt viſit to reprove my fear?
How in a realm ſo diſtant ſhou'd you know
From what deep ſource my ceaſeleſs ſorrows flow?
To all my hope my royal Lord is loſt,
His country's buckler, and the *Grecian* boaſt:
And with conſummate woe to weigh me down,
The heir of all his honours, and his crown,

My

V. 1073. *And with conſummate woe*, &c.] In the original, *Penelope* ſays plainly, ſhe is more concerned for her ſon than her huſband. I ſhall tranſlate *Dacier*'s obſervation upon this paſſage. We ought not to reproach *Penelope* for this ſeemingly ſhocking declaration, in preferring a ſon to a huſband: Her ſentiment is natural and juſt; ſhe had all the reaſon in the world to believe that *Ulyſſes* was dead, ſo that all her hopes, all her affection was entirely placed upon *Telemachus*:

My darling ſon is fled! an eaſy prey
To the fierce ſtorms, or men more fierce than they:
Who in a league of blood aſſociates ſworn,
Will intercept th' unwary Youth's return.
Courage reſume, the ſhadowy form reply'd,
In the protecting care of heav'n confide:
On him attends the blue ey'd martial Maid;
What earthly can implore a ſurer aid?
Me now the guardian Goddeſs deigns to ſend,
To bid thee patient his return attend.
The Queen replies: If in the bleſt abodes,
A Goddeſs thou, haſt commerce with the Gods;
Say, breathes my Lord the bliſsful realm of light,
Or lies he wrapt in ever-during night?
Enquire not of his doom, the Phantom cries,
I ſpeak not all the counſel of the ſkies:
Nor

chus: His loſs therefore muſt unavoidably touch her with the higheſt degree of ſenſibility; if he is loſt, ſhe can have recourſe to no ſecond comfort. But why may we not allow the reaſon which *Penelope* herſelf gives for this ſuperiority of ſorrow for *Telemachus*? "*Telemachus*, ſays ſhe, is unexperienced in the world, and unable to contend with difficulties: whereas *Ulyſſes* knew how to extricate himſelf upon all emergencies." This is a ſufficient reaſon why ſhe ſhould fear more for *Telemachus* than *Ulyſſes*: Her affection might be greater for *Ulyſſes* than *Telemachus*, yet her fears might be ſtronger for the ſon than the huſband, *Ulyſſes* being capable to ſurmount dangers by experience, *Telemachus* being new to all difficulties.

V. 1089. *Enquire not of his doom*, &c.] It may be aſked what is the reaſon of this conduct, and why ſhould the Phantom refuſe to relate any thing concerning the condition of *Ulyſſes*? *Euſtathius* anſwers, that if the Phantom had related the full truth of the ſtory, the Poem had been at an end; the very conſtitution of it requires that *Ulyſſes* ſhould arrive unknown to all, but chiefly to his wife, as will appear in the proſecution of the ſtory: The queſtion is very natural for an affectionate wife to make concerning an abſent huſband; but this being an improper place for the diſcovery, the Poet defers the ſolution of it, 'till the unravelling of the whole in the concluſion of the Poem.

The

Nor muſt indulge with vain diſcourſe, or long,
The windy ſatisfaction of the tongue.
Swift thro' the valves the viſionary fair
Repaſs'd, and viewleſs mix'd with common air.
The Queen awakes, deliver'd of her woes:
With florid joy her heart dilating glows:
The viſion, manifeſt of future fate,
Makes her with hope her ſon's arrival wait.
Mean-time the Suitors plow the wat'ry plain,
Telemachus in thought already ſlain!
When ſight of leſs'ning *Ithaca* was loſt,
Their ſail directed for the *Samian* coaſt,
A ſmall but verdant Iſle appear'd in view,
And *Aſteris* th' advancing Pilot knew:
An ample port the rocks projected form,
To break the rowling waves, and ruffling ſtorm:
That ſafe receſs they gain with happy ſpeed,
And in cloſe ambuſh wait the murd'rous deed.

The action of this book takes up the ſpace of two nights and one day, ſo that from the opening of the Poem to the introduction of *Ulyſſes* are ſix days compleated.

But how long a time *Telemachus* afterwards ſtay'd with *Menelaus* is a queſtion, which has employed ſome modern *French* Critics; one of which maintains, that he ſtaid no longer than theſe two nights at *Lacedæmon*: But it is evident from the ſequel of the *Odyſſey*, that *Telemachus* arrived again at *Ithaca* two days after *Ulyſſes*; but *Ulyſſes* was twenty-nine days in paſſing from *Ogygia* to *Ithaca*, and conſequently during that whole time *Telemachus* muſt have been abſent from *Ithaca*. The ground of that Critick's miſtake was from the ſilence of *Homer* as to the exact time of his ſtay, which was of no importance, being diſtinguiſhed by no action, and only in an Epiſodical part. The ſame thing led me into the like error in the 33d Note on the ſecond book, where it is ſaid that *Telemachus* returned to *Ithaca* in leſs than twelve days.

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The End of the Firſt Volume.